Shojo Beat Manga

Sand Chronicles

Story & Art by

Hinako Ashihara

10

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Shojo Beat
MANGA FROM THE HEART

THE REAL DRAMA BEGINS IN...

Sand Chronicles

Daigo digs up the time capsule he buried twenty years ago when he was only ten. What message did Daigo leave for his future self? And what does it take to live life fully and without regret?

Final Touching Volume!

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Can the sands of time bury the pain of the past?

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Sand
Chronicles

Vol. 10
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Sand Chronicles

Sand Chronicles

Volume 10

Contents

Bonus Episodes
Time Capsule
Part One—5
Part Two—87
Sand Chronicles:
Behind the Scenes I—168
Sand Chronicles:
Bonus Story: Summer, Age 19—170
Sand Chronicles:
Behind the Scenes II—182

Story thus far...

It took years for Ann to come to terms with her mother's suicide. Now she is happily married to Daigo, her childhood boyfriend. In their thirties, Ann, Daigo, and their friends continue to grow and change...

"SOMEDAY...

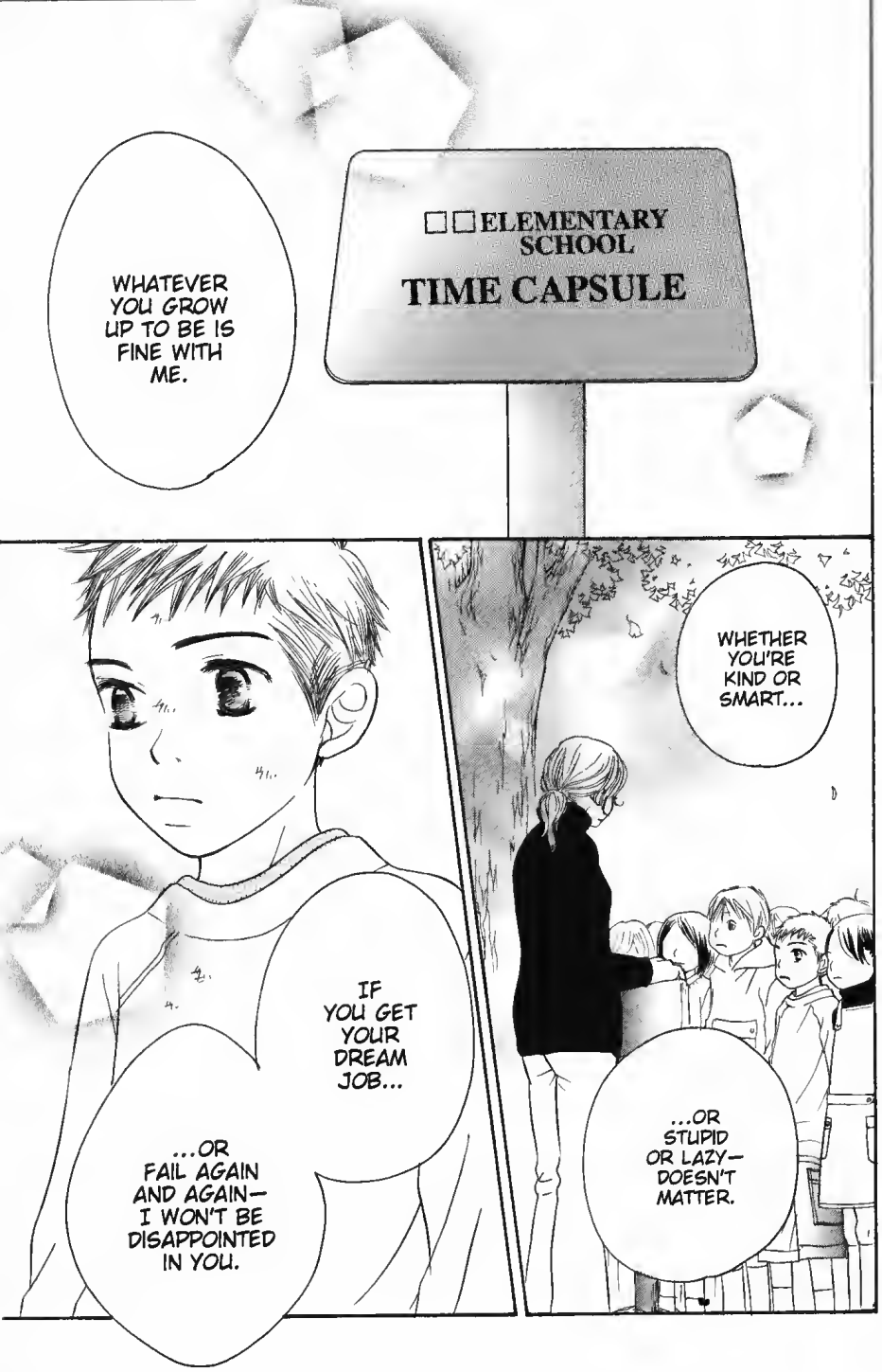
"...LET'S MEET HERE AGAIN."

"IN FIVE YEARS, TEN YEARS OR TWENTY...

"WHATEVER HAPPENS IN OUR FUTURE...

"...LET'S MEET HERE AGAIN."

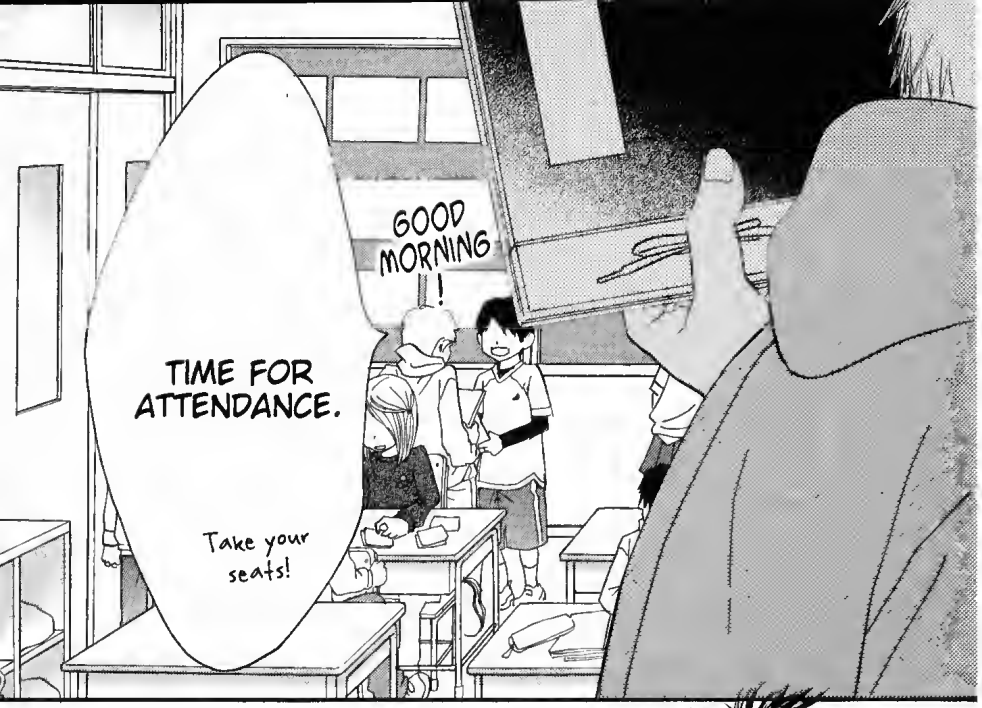
WHY UNDER THE GINKGO TREE?


WHATEVER YOU GROW UP TO BE IS FINE WITH ME.
□□ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TIME CAPSULE
WHETHER YOU'RE KIND OR SMART...
...OR STUPID OR LAZY— DOESN'T MATTER.
IF YOU GET YOUR DREAM JOB...
...OR FAIL AGAIN AND AGAIN— I WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED IN YOU.

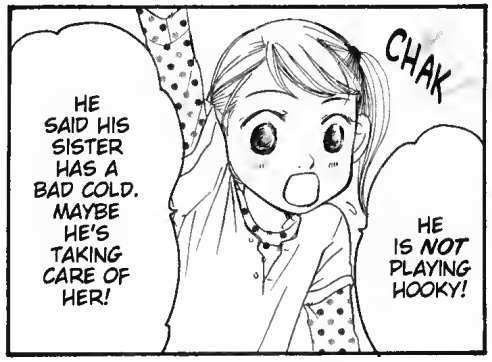
GOOD FOOD MAKES GOOD MEMORIES!
AFTER-WARDS, WE'LL GATHER GINKGO NUTS TO MAKE CHAWAN-MUSHI.
HMM ...
THAT WOULD BE BAD LUCK!
AND THEY SAY A BODY IS BURIED BENEATH THE CHERRY TREE.
BECAUSE IT'S AUTUMN.
Ah ha ha!
WHEEEE!
Pee-yew!
ONE BAG FOR EACH OF YOU.
HERE YOU GO...
SHUNK
...INTO THE CAPSULE.
THEN WE'LL BURY IT.
PUT WHATEVER YOU'D LIKE TO LEAVE FOR THE FUTURE...

LET'S MEET HERE AGAIN...
...IN TWENTY YEARS...
...AND FIND OUT WHAT THE FUTURE HAD IN STORE FOR US!
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TIME CAPSULE
WHAT FUTURE DID I...

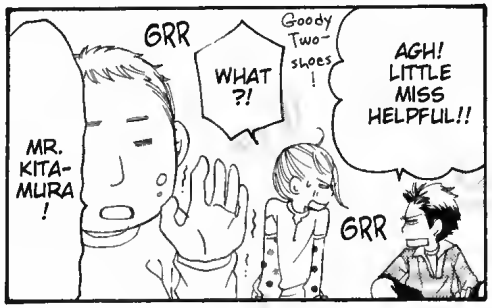
DON'T EVER LIE TO YOURSELF ...
HAVE FAITH IN YOURSELF. BE AUTHENTIC.
...OR HIDE FROM THE TRUTH.
THE LIFE YOU CHOOSE IS UP TO YOU.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU BECOME SOMEONE THAT YOU LIKE.
I BELIEVE IN ALL OF YOU.


GOOD MORNING!
TIME FOR ATTENDANCE.
Take your seats!

RA TLE
WHOA!
...IMAGINE FOR MYSELF BACK THEN?


HE SAID HIS SISTER HAS A BAD COLD. MAYBE HE'S TAKING CARE OF HER!
CHAK
HE IS NOT PLAYING HOOKY!

HA HA HA
Really?
HE'S PLAYING HOOKY! I SAW HIM HANGING HIS MOM'S UNDERWEAR OUT TO DRY THIS MORNING!


GRR
WHAT?!
Goody Two-shoes!
AGH! LITTLE MISS HELPFUL!!
MR. KITAMURA!
GRR

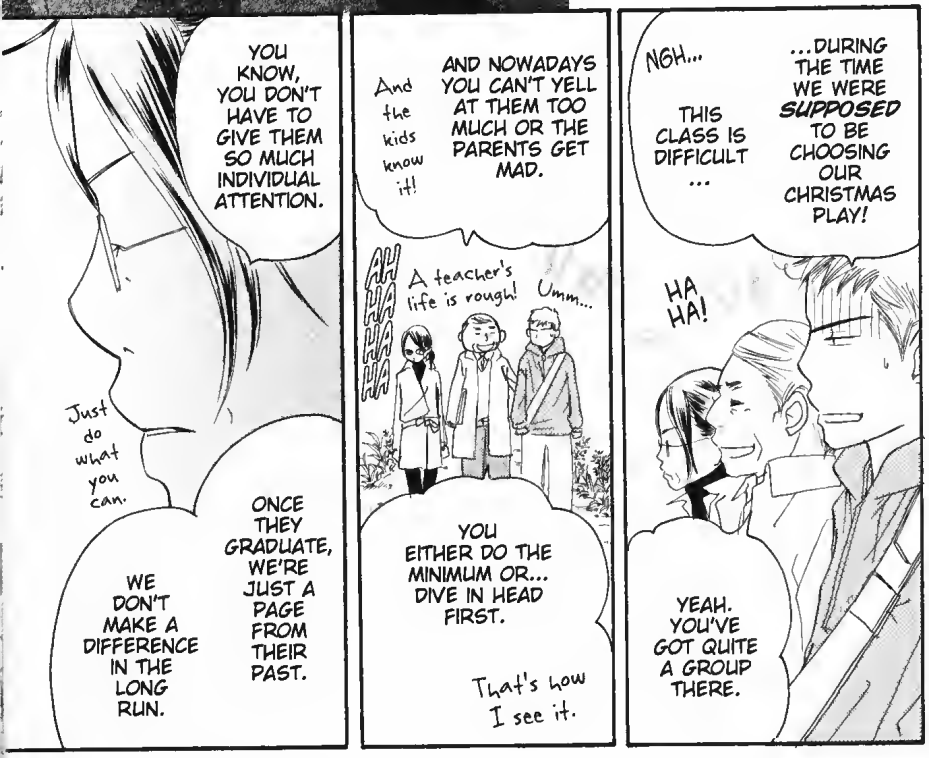
IS HE ABSENT TODAY?
HMM...
RIKU MORINAGA?

HERE!
NISHIMURA?
NOGUCHI?
HERE...
MORINAGA?
MIURA?
HERE!

SOB SOB SOB SOB SOB
KARIN'S CRYING!
RESTROOM
FLUSSSH
REMEMBER...
...IF YOUR TUMMY HURTS, JUST TELL ME.
THERE'S NO NEED TO CRY.
NOD
Feel better now?
...TO SPEAK UP.
SOMETIMES IT'S HARD FOR GIRLS...
YOU CAN'T TREAT THEM ALL THE SAME.
MR. KITAMURA...? RIKU MORINAGA'S MOTHER IS ON THE PHONE.
EVEN A LITTLE STRESS ...
...CAN GIVE CHILDREN TUMMY ACHES... OR MAKE IT HARD FOR THEM TO FOCUS.
EVERY KID IS DIFFERENT THOUGH. SOME ARE SURPRISINGLY RESILIENT.
BY NOON, SHE'S FINE.
IT HAPPENS EVERY MORNING ...
I wonder what the problem is?
S P
MAYBE SHE DOESN'T LIKE SCHOOL.
MIGHT BE NERVES.

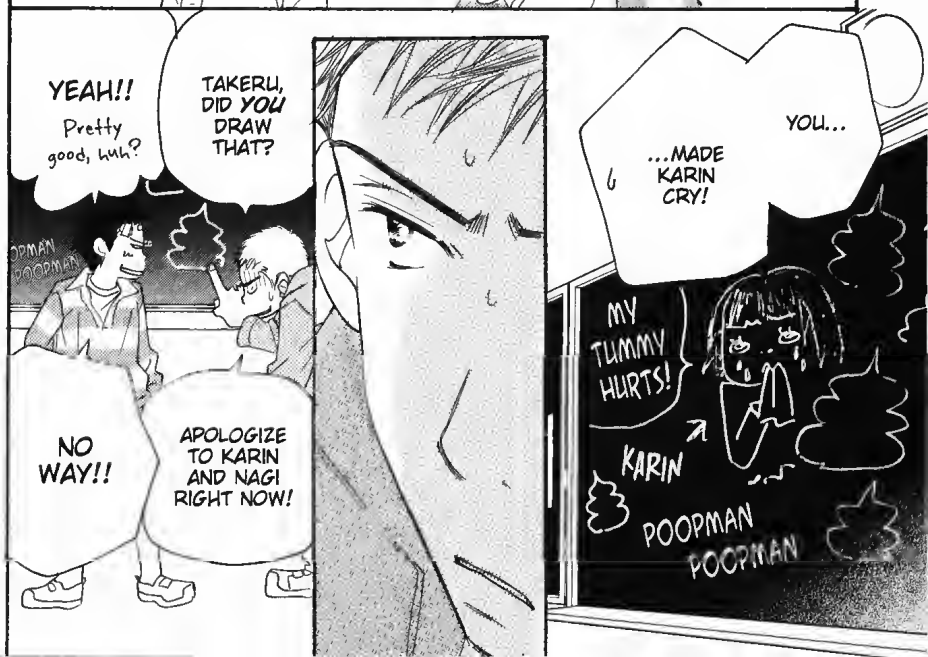
HELLO?
MR. KITAMURA? THIS IS RIKU'S MOTHER.
Thanks for looking out for him.
RIKU...
I CAN TELL IT'S YOU!
DARN! I KNEW IT WOULDN'T WORK!
RATTLE
THE OTHER DAY OUR ELECTRICITY GOT SHUT OFF.
And dad's company might go under...
DAIGO-O-O!
OKAY, OKAY. I'LL COME CHECK ON YOU AFTER SCHOOL.
Spare me the gory details! Please!
WHERE ARE YOUR PARENTS?
BOTH MY SISTERS ARE SICK.
Riku-u-u!
KOFF KOFF
I HAVE SIX BROTHERS AND SISTERS! THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE A DAY OFF.
AT WORK!
Gimme a break, will you?

SNIFF
IN THE END ...
...WE TALKED IT OUT IN HOMEROOM ...
SOB
KARIN BUGS ME!!
BE NICE!
TAKERU !!!


YOU KNOW, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE THEM SO MUCH INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION.
Just do what you can.
WE DON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LONG RUN.
ONCE THEY GRADUATE, WE'RE JUST A PAGE FROM THEIR PAST.
And the kids know it!
AND NOWADAYS YOU CAN'T YELL AT THEM TOO MUCH OR THE PARENTS GET MAD.
AH HA HA HA HA
A teacher's life is rough!
Umm...
YOU EITHER DO THE MINIMUM OR... DIVE IN HEAD FIRST.
That's how I see it.
NGH...
THIS CLASS IS DIFFICULT ...
...DURING THE TIME WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE CHOOSING OUR CHRISTMAS PLAY!
HA HA!
YEAH. YOU'VE GOT QUITE A GROUP THERE.

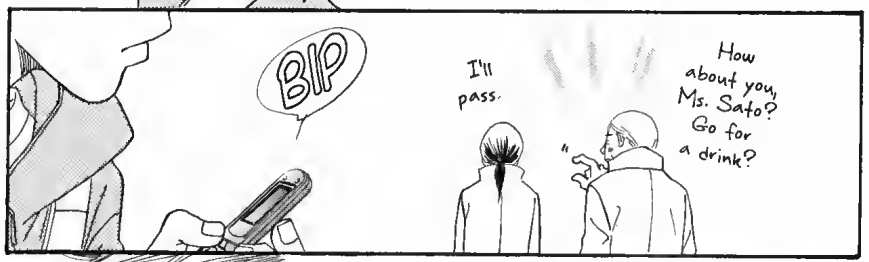
4 - 1
IT'S NOT MY FAULT!
GAH!
TAKERU AND NAGI ARE FIGHTING!!

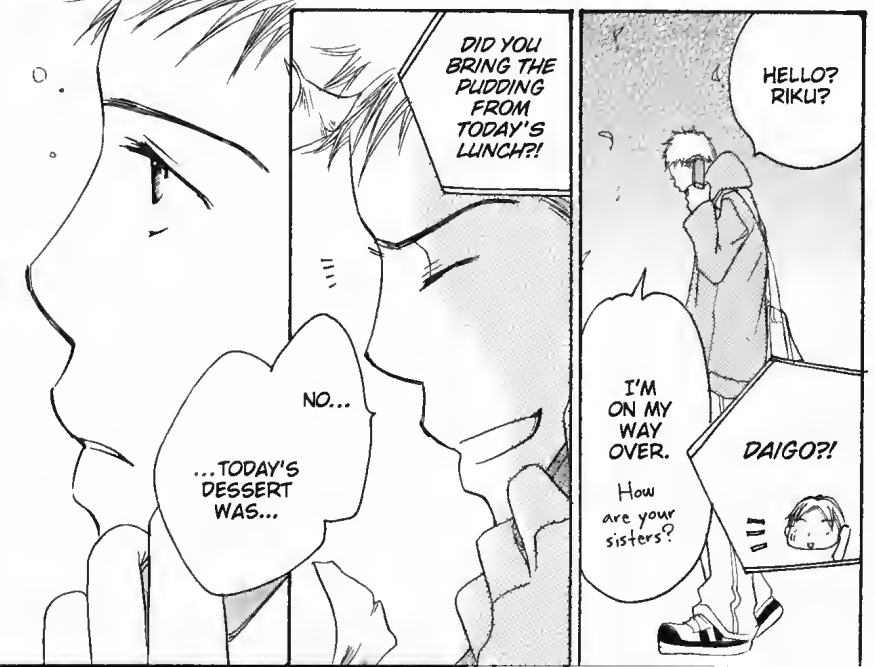
NO, YOU STARTED IT!!!
HMPH
SHE STARTED IT!!

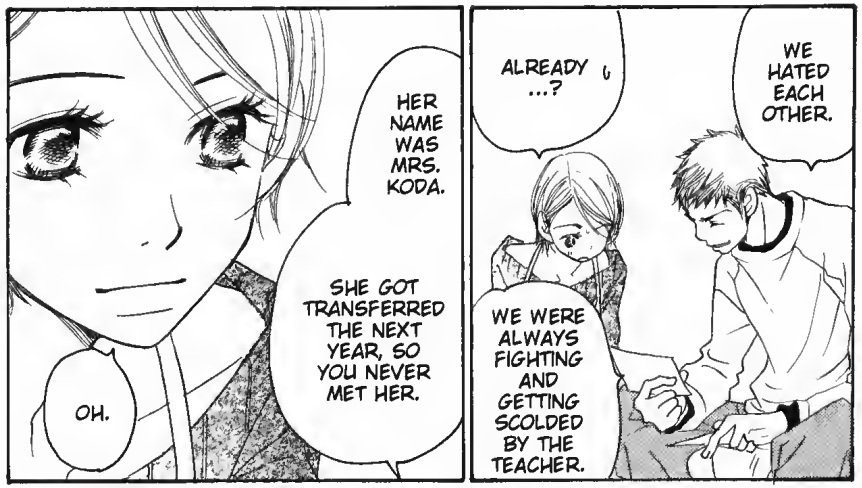

YEAH!! Pretty good, huh?
TAKERU, DID YOU DRAW THAT?
NO WAY!!
APOLOGIZE TO KARIN AND NAGI RIGHT NOW!
YOU...
...MADE KARIN CRY!
MY TUMMY HURTS!
KARIN
POOPMAN
POOPMAN

...STRAW-BERRY GELATIN.
"DEAR FORMER STUDENTS ...
"...OF CLASS 4-1 AT □□ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?"
DAIGO?

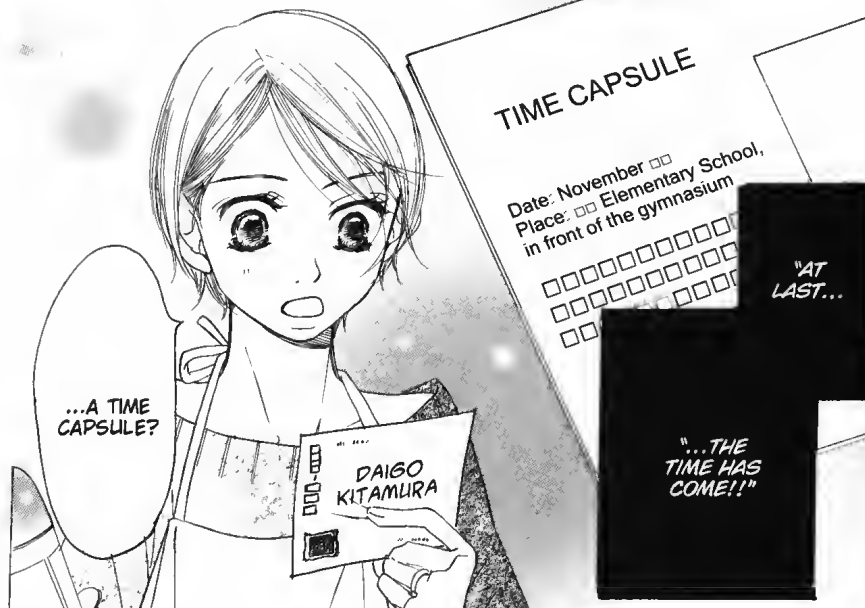
HA HA!
I'LL KEEP THAT IN MIND.
IT'S GOOD TO WORK HARD, BUT...
...BE CARE-FUL!
WOULDN'T WANT TO LOSE THAT PRETTY NEW WIFE OF YOURS!
NO THANKS. I'VE GOT TO STOP BY A STUDENT'S HOUSE.
MR. KITAMURA! JOIN ME FOR A DRINK?
A beer or two?
Some other time.


BIP
I'll pass.
How about you, Ms. Sato? Go for a drink?


DID YOU BRING THE PUDDING FROM TODAY'S LUNCH?!
NO...
...TODAY'S DESSERT WAS...
HELLO? RIKU?
I'M ON MY WAY OVER.
How are your sisters?
DAIGO?!

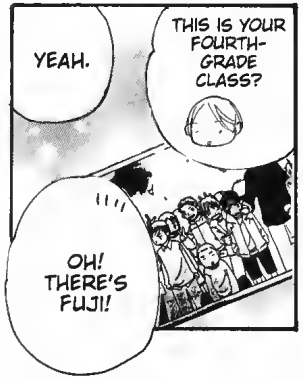

HER NAME WAS MRS. KODA.
SHE GOT TRANSFERRED THE NEXT YEAR, SO YOU NEVER MET HER.
OH.
WE HATED EACH OTHER.
ALREADY ...?
WE WERE ALWAYS FIGHTING AND GETTING SCOLDED BY THE TEACHER.

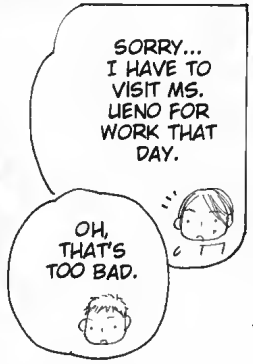
IT'S BEEN TWENTY YEARS...
"SOMEDAY..."
I'M KINDA NERVOUS!
SHE WAS A GOOD TEACHER.
...AND TREATED US LIKE GROWN-UPS.
SHE WAS ALWAYS HONEST WITH US...


TIME CAPSULE
Date: November □□
Place: □□ Elementary School, in front of the gymnasium
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□
"AT LAST...
"...THE TIME HAS COME!!"
...A TIME CAPSULE?
DAIGO KITAMURA

WANNA COME? OK! AND SUZUKI WILL BE THERE.
CHAWAN-MUSHI?
Why?
AFTER WE DIG IT UP, WE'LL GATHER GINKGO NUTS AND MAKE CHAWANMUSHI.
That's the plan.

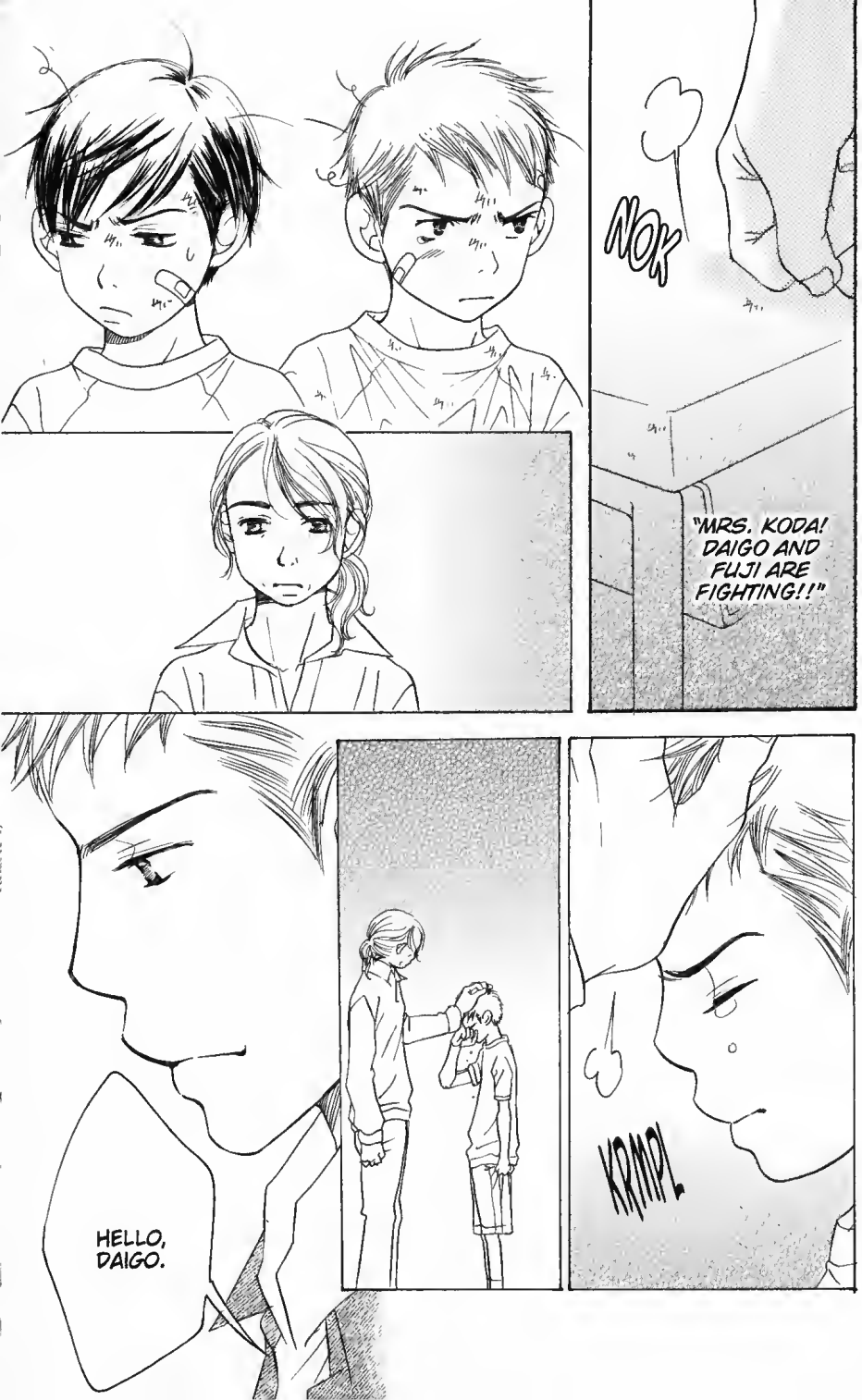
YEAH. WE BURIED IT TWENTY YEARS AGO UNDER A GINKGO TREE AT SCHOOL.
REALLY?
How fun!


YEAH.
THIS IS YOUR FOURTH-GRADE CLASS?
OH! THERE'S FUJI!


SORRY... I HAVE TO VISIT MS. UENO FOR WORK THAT DAY.
OH, THAT'S TOO BAD.

BUT HE TOLD ME...
"I'LL BE THERE WHATEVER IT TAKES. OPEN MY CAPSULE AND YOU'RE DEAD."
He's flying in from Tokyo.
Now I'm curious...
They haven't changed a bit ...
PAT PAT PAT
I should've worn something nicer!
HE'S GONNA BE LATE, THOUGH, BECAUSE OF WORK.
FUJI'S COMING?
I didn't think he'd show.
MRS. KODA MUST BE RETIRED BY NOW.
I wonder how she is?
WHERE DOES SHE LIVE?
Um... S TOWN!
S TOWN?
THAT'S NEAR YOU...
...ISN'T IT, DAIGO?
HUH? Where'd he go?
Dunno...

TUNK
"...LET'S MEET HERE AGAIN."
DAIGO!
IS EVERY-ONE HERE?
That's funny!
I'm getting fat!
Gya ha ha!
MY HUSBAND SPOILS ME!!
GYAAAH!!
FUJI'S COMING?!
WE'RE STILL WAIT-ING FOR ...
...MRS. KODA AND TSUKISHIMA !!
You're sorta plump ...
Whoa...
DID YOU PUT ON WEIGHT?
YEP! KNOW WHY...?
SORRY. TRAFFIC WAS BAD.
YOU'RE LATE!
Teachers oughta be punctual!
Long time no see!
You haven't changed at all!
YEAH. I'M STILL IN THE PREFECTURE THOUGH.
About an hour from here.
I HEARD YOU MOVED AWAY.


"MRS. KODA! DAIGO AND FUJI ARE FIGHTING!!"
NOK
HELLO, DAIGO.
KRMP!

WHAT IF SOMEONE SNUCK IN WHO WAS UP TO NO GOOD?!
ROTTEN SECURITY ...
Hey! IT'S OPEN!
RATTLE
THMP
HMM...
LOOKS LIKE ANY OTHER SCHOOL...
Like the one where I teach ...
SCHEDULE
青空
青空
青
青

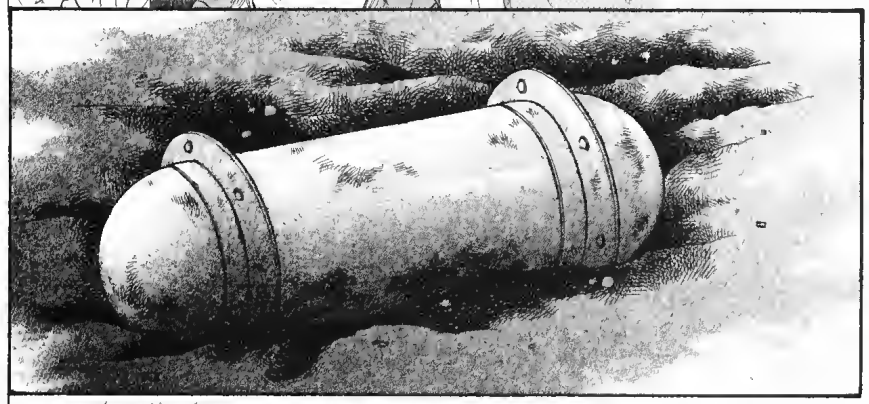
□□ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
TIME CAPSULE
HAS EVERYONE GOT A SCOOP?
THE GROUND IS TOO HARD!! How far down is it anyway?
THERE'S ONLY ONE REAL SHOVEL?! That's ridiculous!
A SCOOP ?!! I can't dig with this!!
UGH! LITTLE MISS BOSSY!!
Did she just call us "boys"?
GYA HA HA HA
Come back and dig!
YOU'RE NOT KIDS ANYMORE !!
BOYS!! OVER HERE!!
Whoa!
Cool!
We used to be natural enemies!

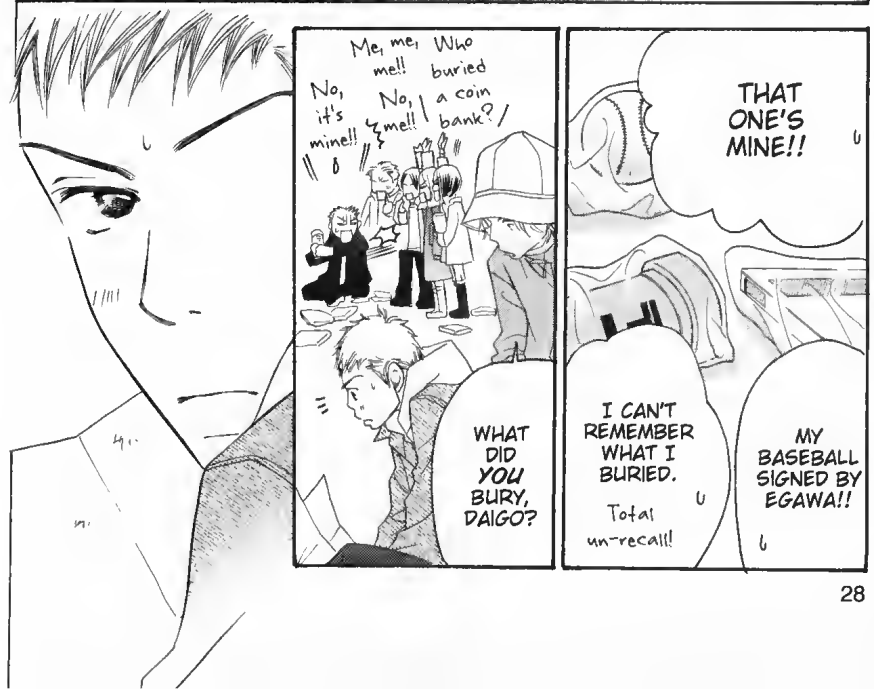
YOU SHOULDN'T ENTER THE BUILDING WITHOUT PERMISSION.
C'mon! It's time, Daigo!
MRS. KODA!
GOOD TO SEE YOU!

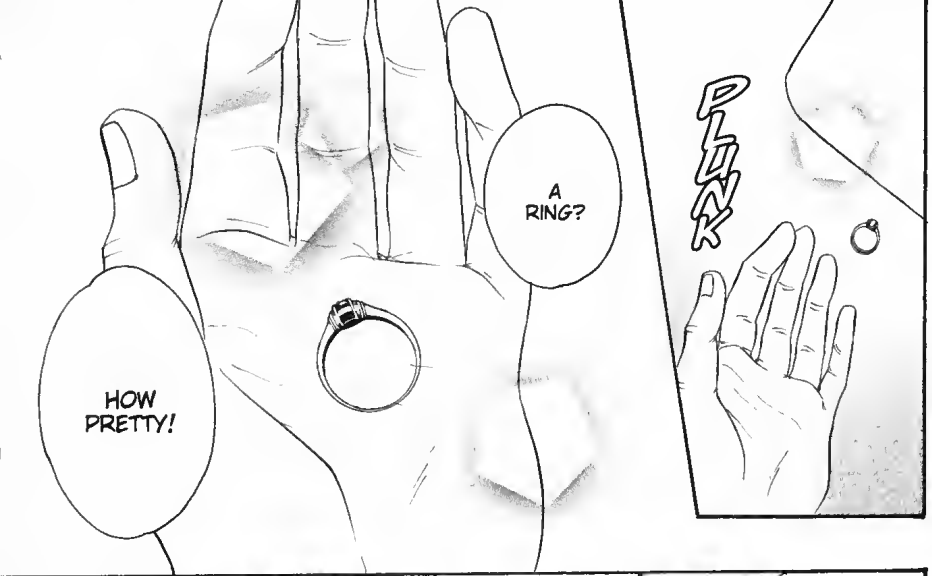
4-1 Daigo Kitamura
UM...
A picture you made in art class?
HOW... BORING.
REJECTED FOR LACK OF DRAMATIC IMPACT!
FLICK
HEY!
WHOSE IS THIS? TSUKI-SHIMA'S?

SLAM
SKREEEECH
I SAY WE OPEN IT.
GRIN
WHAT'LL WE DO?
SMIRK
FUJI TSUKISHIMA
Tempting though...
NO! THAT WOULD BE WRONG!
HE WON'T CARE.
BESIDES, IT'S HIS FAULT FOR BEING LATE.

OOOOOH...
FOUND IT!
TACK

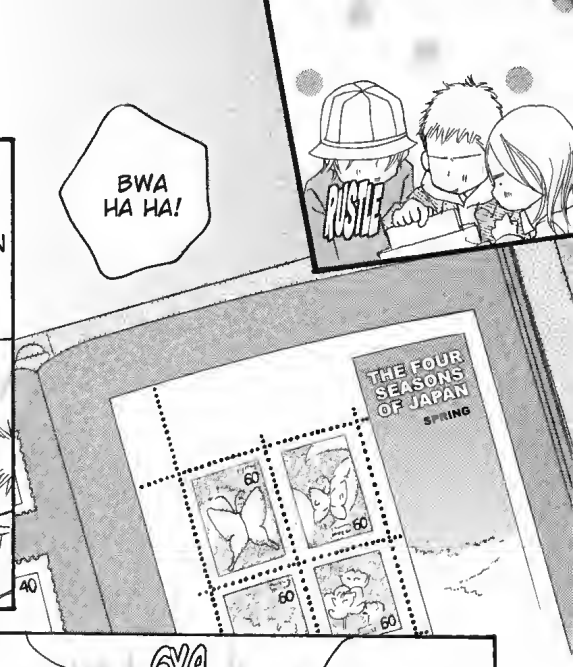



Me, me, me!! Who buried me!!
No, it's mine!!
No, me!!
a coin bank?
WHAT DID YOU BURY, DAIGO?
THAT ONE'S MINE!!
I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT I BURIED.
Total un-recall!!
MY BASEBALL SIGNED BY EGAWA!!


HOW PRETTY!
A RING?
PLINK

I need one more...
WHERE'S ANN?
ISN'T SHE COMING?
Do we have enough?
Ah ha ha ha!
GRAB SOME GINKGO NUTS AND LET'S HEAD OVER TO OKI'S!
Ten nuts per person!
Pee-yew!
Yahoo!
It's chawan-mushi time!

I TOLD YOU NOT TO OPEN IT!!!
A STAMP COLLECTION?!
What a dork!
So un-cool!
GYAHAHAHA


BWA HA HA!
THE FOUR SEASONS OF JAPAN
SPRING
60
40

I STILL LIKE HIM...
IT MEANT A LOT TO ME!!
What's wrong with stamp collecting?!
GYAHAHAHA
EVERYONE HAS A COUPLE OF SKELETONS IN THEIR CLOSET.
Don't worry about it.

WHAT DID YOU BURY, MRS. KODA?
AH HA HA HA!
MRS. KODA! DAIGO AND FUJI ARE FIGHTING AGAIN.

SO YOUR DAD FINALLY AGREED?
Pull yourselves together!
Grow up!
YEAH. TOOK LONGER THAN I THOUGHT THOUGH...
I'D LIKE YOU AND ANN ...
...TO COME.
WE'LL HAVE THE CEREMONY HERE IN THE SPRING.
SAME HERE.
KLINK
BARLEY TEA
KLINK
I'M...
...HAPPY FOR YOU.
My sworn enemy!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!!
ATTENTION, EVERY-ONE!
MRS. KODA WILL NOW DELIVER A HEART-WARMING SPEECH!
HA HA HA
HA HA...

ABOUT WHAT?
TELL ME.
I'LL PASS IT ON.
...
TOO BAD...
I WANTED TO TALK TO HER ABOUT SOMETHING.
SHE'S WORKING.
She wanted to come though.
SHE'S A VISITING NURSE NOW.
She went back to school.

WHA-A-AT?!!
FUJI'S GETTING MARRIED ?!
I'M...
...GETTING MARRIED.

MRS. KODA!
I'LL GIVE YOU A LIFT.
S TOWN, RIGHT? I'M GOING THAT WAY.
Gya ha ha ha!
See ya!

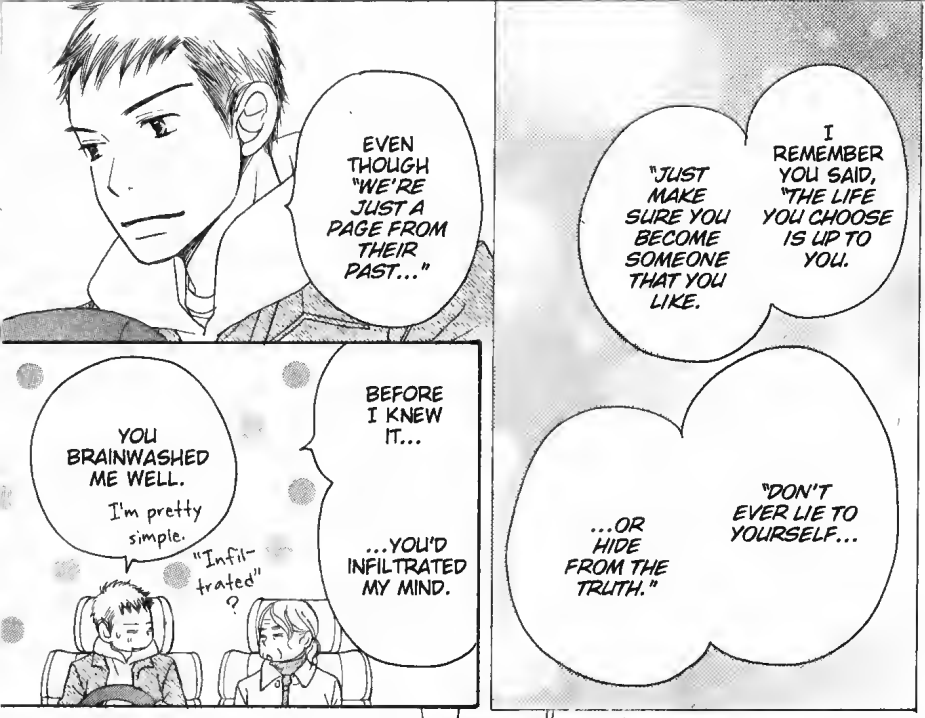
TUNK
YOU USED TO BE AN AWFUL CRYBABY ...
IT'S A PLEASANT SURPRISE TO FIND OUT...
...YOU'VE BECOME A TEACHER YOURSELF!
It's good to grow old.
I thought you'd be pleased!

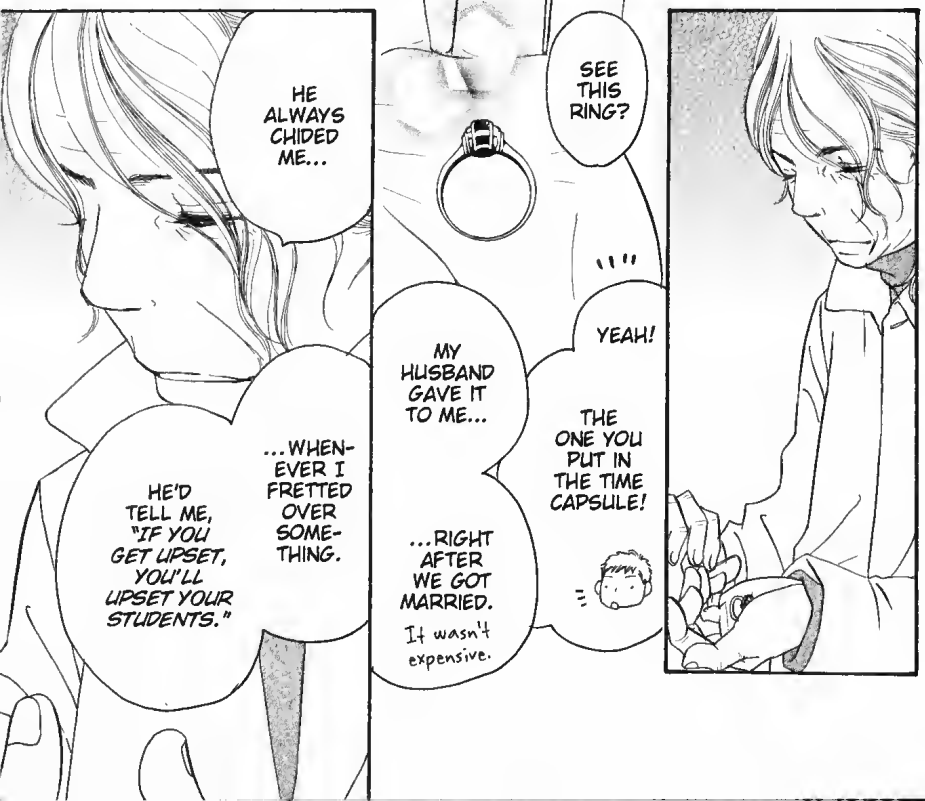
GETTING PAMPERED BY FORMER PUPILS...
...IS ONE OF THE GREATEST JOYS OF BEING A TEACHER.
KACHAK
Hop in!

...TO GATHER HERE TODAY.
...OUR PROMISE TWENTY YEARS AGO...
...THAT YOU ALL HONORED ...

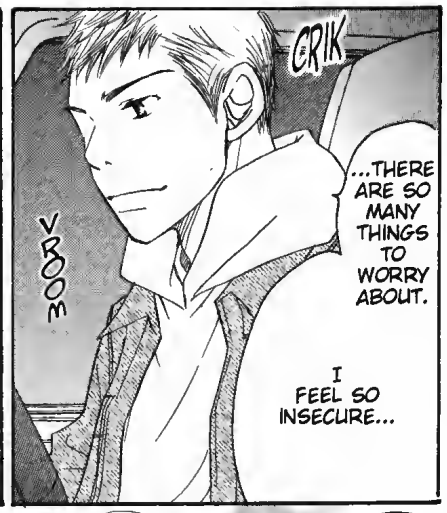
I'M JUST GRATEFUL ...

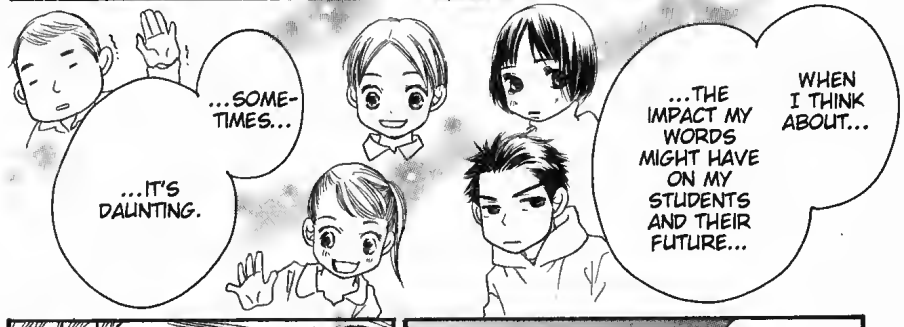
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

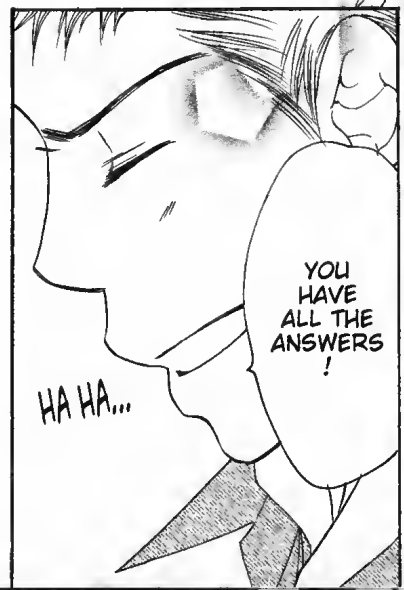

EVEN THOUGH "WE'RE JUST A PAGE FROM THEIR PAST..."
I REMEMBER YOU SAID, "THE LIFE YOU CHOOSE IS UP TO YOU.
"JUST MAKE SURE YOU BECOME SOMEONE THAT YOU LIKE.
"DON'T EVER LIE TO YOURSELF...
...OR HIDE FROM THE TRUTH."
BEFORE I KNEW IT...
...YOU'D INFILTRATED MY MIND.
YOU BRAINWASHED ME WELL.
I'm pretty simple.
"Infiltrated"?

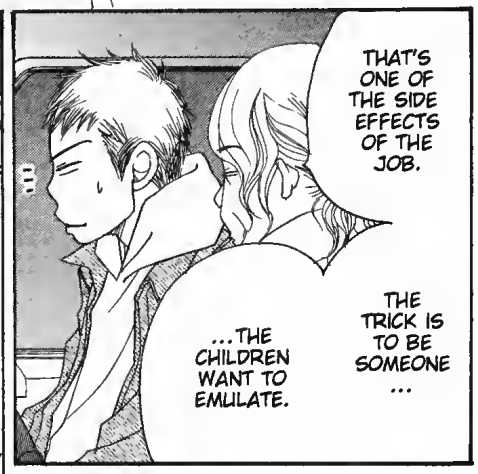

HE ALWAYS CHIDED ME...
...WHENEVER I FRETTED OVER SOMETHING.
HE'D TELL ME, "IF YOU GET UPSET, YOU'LL UPSET YOUR STUDENTS."
SEE THIS RING?
MY HUSBAND GAVE IT TO ME...
...RIGHT AFTER WE GOT MARRIED.
It wasn't expensive.
YEAH!
THE ONE YOU PUT IN THE TIME CAPSULE!

TEACHING IS LIKE BRAIN-WASHING.


GRIK
VROOM
...THERE ARE SO MANY THINGS TO WORRY ABOUT.
I FEEL SO INSECURE...


...SOMETIMES...
...IT'S DAUNTING.
WHEN I THINK ABOUT...
...THE IMPACT MY WORDS MIGHT HAVE ON MY STUDENTS AND THEIR FUTURE...


HA HA...
YOU HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS!

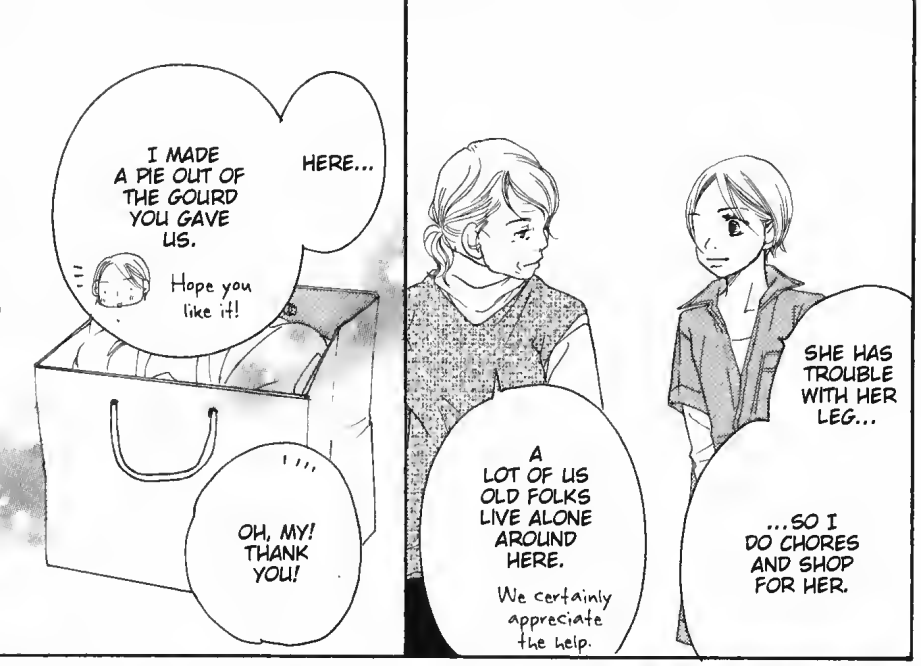

THAT'S ONE OF THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE JOB.
THE TRICK IS TO BE SOMEONE ...
...THE CHILDREN WANT TO EMULATE.

IT...
I STILL CATCH MYSELF COOKING DINNER FOR TWO SOMETIMES!
...SOMETHING HE DIDN'T LIKE!
AND I FEEL BAD WHEN I PREPARE ...
HE WAS AN INTRINSIC PART OF MY LIFE.
WE WERE TOGETHER FOR A LONG TIME.
...UH...
THOSE LOOK LIKE HIS BELONGINGS ...
...SORT OF SEEMS LIKE YOUR HUSBAND STILL LIVES HERE...

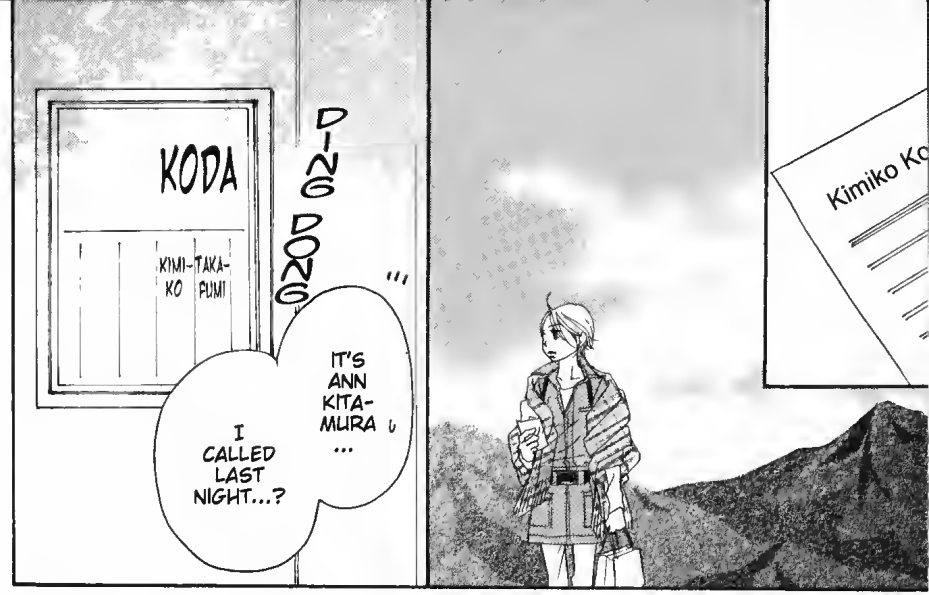
FEELINGS ...
...CAN PASS FROM ONE PERSON TO THE NEXT.
HE PASSED AWAY EIGHT YEARS AGO.
EVERY-THING ...
...HE EVER SAID IS A PART OF ME.
Okay, I'll come in.
I'M OLD AND ALONE, SO THE PLACE IS A BIT BARE.
TAKE SOME VEGETABLES WITH YOU!
KODA
KIMIKO
NO, NO! I DON'T WANT TO TROUBLE YOU!
DON'T BE SILLY! YOU CAN WAIT INSIDE WHILE I FIND A BAG...

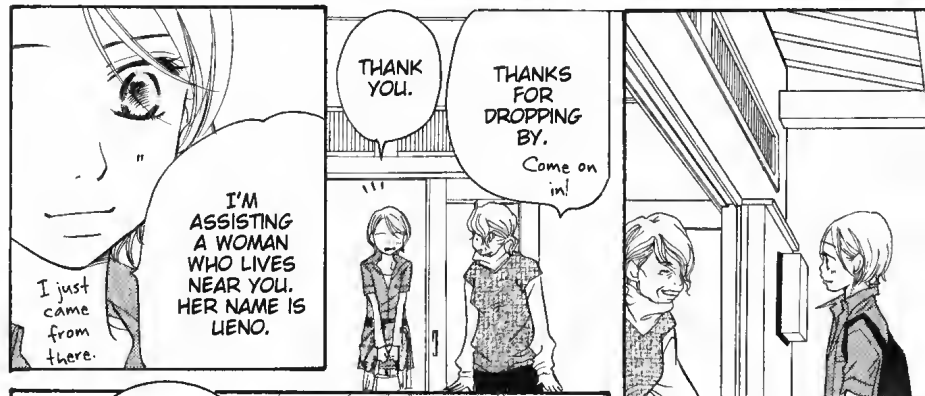
How cute!
O MORE
RYING!
RUSTLE
4-1
Daigo Kitamura
...
O MORE
RYING!
NO MORE CRYING!
I'M GONNA TAKE A BATH.
NO MOR
CRYIN
SNATCH

VROOM
HONK
YOU'RE MARRIED, AREN'T YOU?
BRING YOUR WIFE WITH YOU NEXT TIME.
I'd love to meet her!
SURE THING.
What a huge gourd!
SHE'D LIKE THAT.
I'll let her know.
I COULD DROP BY ON MY WAY BACK SOME-TIME.
SHE SAID YOU SHOULD COME VISIT SOMETIME.
WOW!
WHAT'S THIS?
Is that the picture from your time capsule?
Kitamura
YEAH.
HMM... S TOWN ISN'T FAR FROM MS. UENO.
VEGETABLES !!
Loads of them!

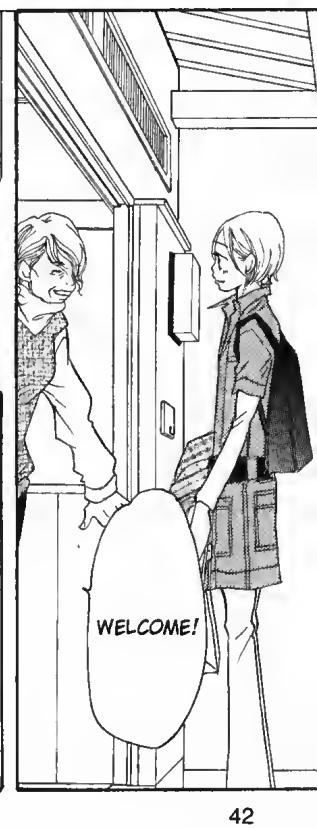

I MADE A PIE OUT OF THE GOURD YOU GAVE US.
HERE...
Hope you like it!
OH, MY! THANK YOU!
A LOT OF US OLD FOLKS LIVE ALONE AROUND HERE.
We certainly appreciate the help.
SHE HAS TROUBLE WITH HER LEG...
...SO I DO CHORES AND SHOP FOR HER.

AND HIGH BLOOD SUGAR.
HIS DOCTOR WARNED HIM ABOUT IT, BUT...
MY HUSBAND HAD SUCH A SWEET TOOTH.


KODA
KIMI-KO
TAKA-FUMI
DING DONG
I CALLED LAST NIGHT...?
IT'S ANN KITA-MURA ...
Kimiko Ko


I just came from there.
I'M ASSISTING A WOMAN WHO LIVES NEAR YOU. HER NAME IS UENO.
THANK YOU.
THANKS FOR DROPPING BY.
Come on in!

I'M A HOME CAREGIVER.
MOSTLY I JUST HELP HER OUT AROUND THE HOUSE.
I'm still new to the job... =
MS. UENO ...?


WELCOME!

...
AH HA HA!
YAAAY!
NO MORE CRYING!!
...WAS ALWAYS ...
...CRYING OVER SOMETHING.
NO MORE CRYING!!
DING DONG
YAHOO!
UH-OH! HURRY UP!
IN YOUR SEATS. IT'S TIME FOR HOME-ROOM.
SIGH
4-1 Daigo Kitamura
4-1 Daigo Kitamura
PUSH
NO MORE CRYING!
BOMP BOMP BOMP
YAAAH!
OKAY...
YIPPEE!

"DON'T WORRY. YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING."
MY HUSBAND WAS SO ENCOURAG-ING! HE'D ALWAYS SAY...
THAT'S WHY I WAS ABLE TO BE STRONG FOR MY STUDENTS.
BUT WHEN A PUPIL ASKS A QUESTION ...
...TO POINT THEM IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
...A TEACHER MUSTN'T HESITATE ...
YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE HAPPINESS LIES.
DAIGO ...
NO MORE CRYING!!
...ON THE PICTURE HE PUT IN THE TIME CAPSULE.
It was a solemn vow.
HE WROTE "NO MORE CRYING!!" ...
YOU HAD...
...A BIG INFLUENCE ON DAIGO.

THW
AK
HUBBUB
FIGHT! FIGHT!
MRS. KODA! DAIGO AND FUJI ARE FIGHTING!!!
MIKI

RICH BRAT
FUJI
YOU'RE FILTHY!
IF YOU CAN'T WASH THEM, BUY NEW ONES!!

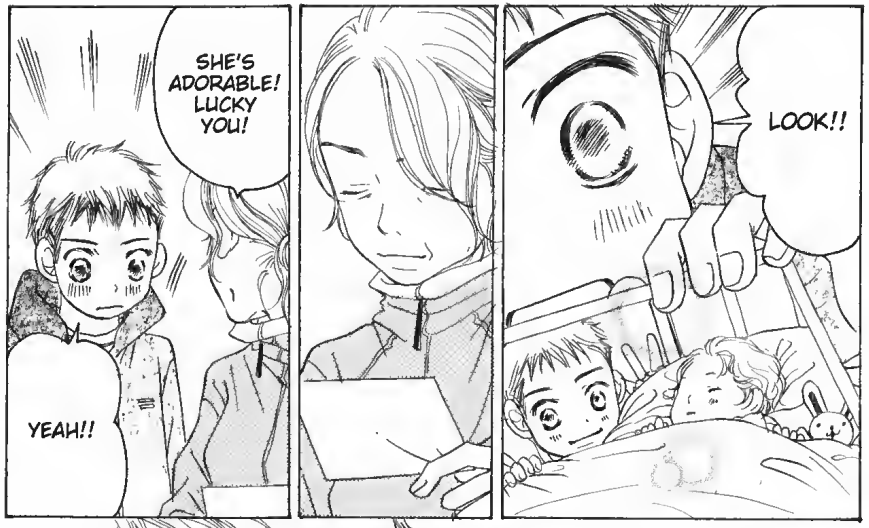
HE'D ALWAYS ...
...CLENCH HIS TEETH WHEN HE CRIED.
It was cute.
FUJI ....!
RUMPL

YOU MEAN URI?
SHE WAS BORN PREMATURELY. DAIGO'S MOTHER HAD TO STAY IN THE HOSPITAL WITH HER FOR QUITE SOME TIME AFTER THE BIRTH.

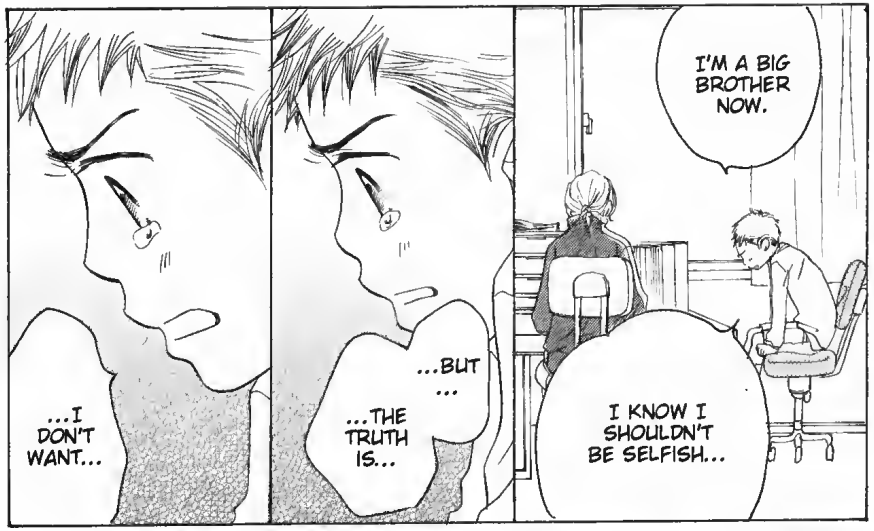
If you want to talk, raise your hand.
DAIGO HAS...
...A LITTLE SISTER, DOESN'T HE?
Me! Me!
Call on me!

THE LAUNDRY'S PILING UP...
MY MOM ISN'T HOME.
I pulled them out of the pile.
You didn't wash them?!
THEY'RE ALL WRINKLED!

THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF...
...A DIFFICULT TIME FOR DAIGO.
4 - 1
"DAIGO! WHAT'S WITH YOUR GYM CLOTHES?!"



I LOOKED FORWARD TO WATCHING MY STUDENTS GROW UP.
BUT I WORRIED TOO.
YOU NEVER KNOW HOW THEY'LL TURN OUT.
I'M...
...NOT GONNA CRY ANYMORE!



"MRS. KODA!

MY SISTER URI IS BACK FROM THE HOSPITAL!!"

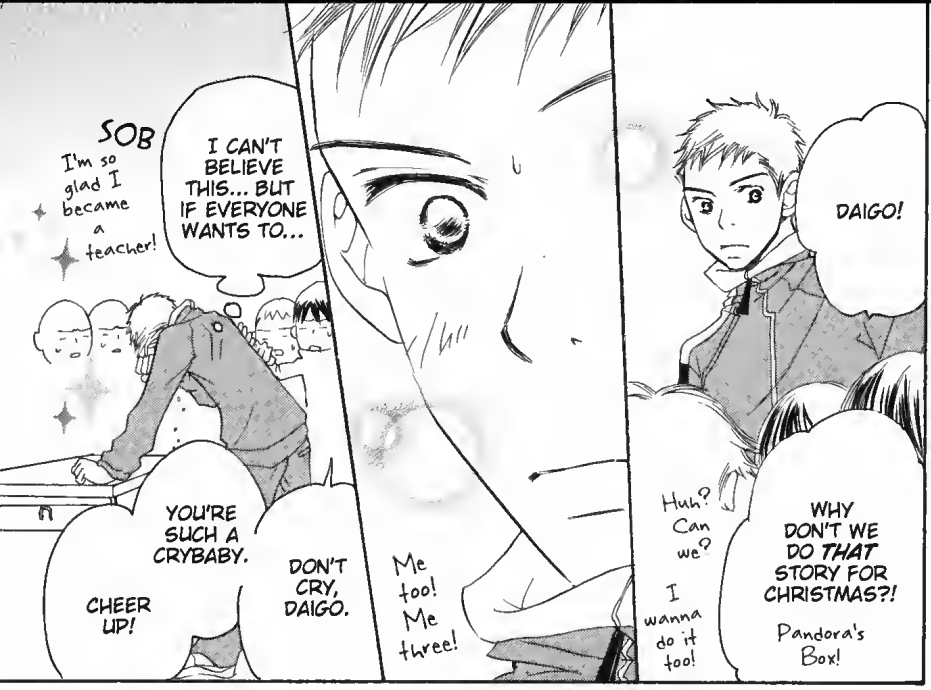
He's gotta be kidding!
GRIN
PLAYS ARE HARD WORK. WHY DON'T WE JUST SING A SONG?
I WANT TO WORK ON LOTS OF HARD STUFF WITH YOU...
...SO YOU'LL REMEMBER ME.
THAT'S MY GOAL.
IT'S THE HARD WORK THAT MAKES IT WORTHWHILE!

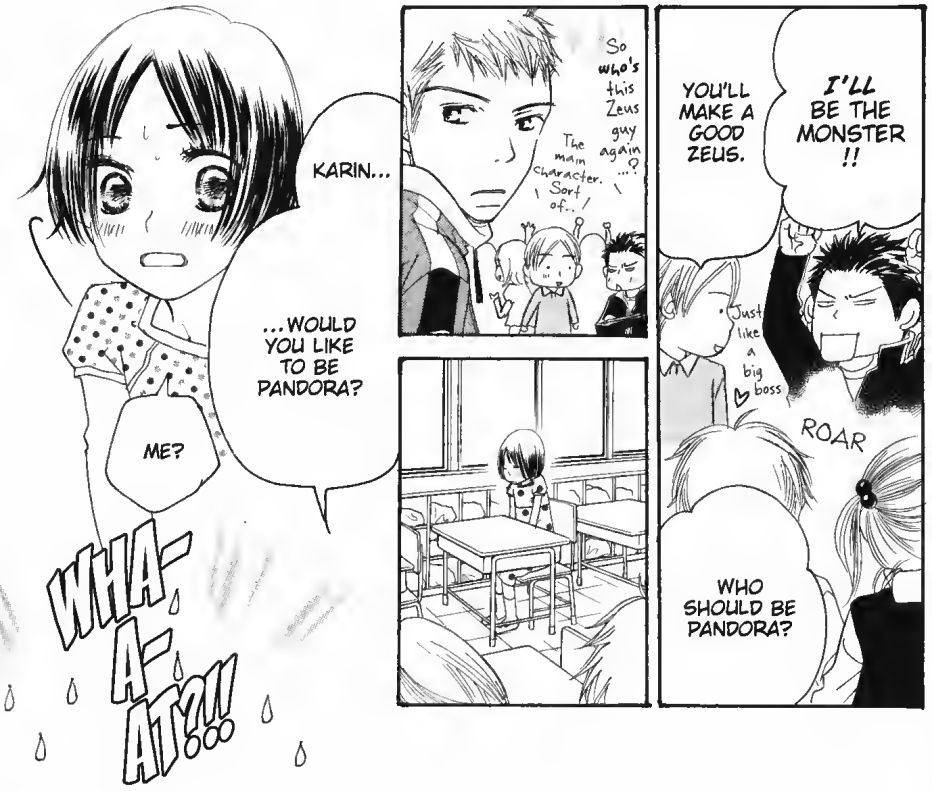
4-1 Daigo Kitamura
THAT'S RIGHT!
A...TIME CAPSULE?
IT'S LIKE...YOUR FEELINGS JUMP OUT OF IT...
...ALONG WITH YOUR CHILDHOOD MEMORIES!
TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW, IT'LL BE REALLY EXCITING TO OPEN IT UP.
DAIGO, WHERE'D THAT PICTURE COME FROM?
It's got your name on it.
OH, I'M GLAD YOU BROUGHT THAT UP!
I was afraid no one would notice.

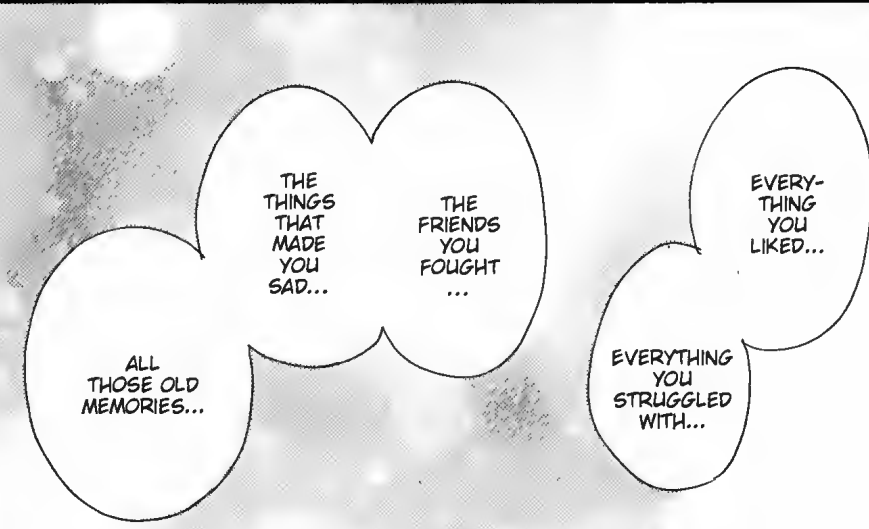
...I HELD MY BREATH FOR TWENTY YEARS...
...UNTIL THE REUNION.
THE TRUTH IS...

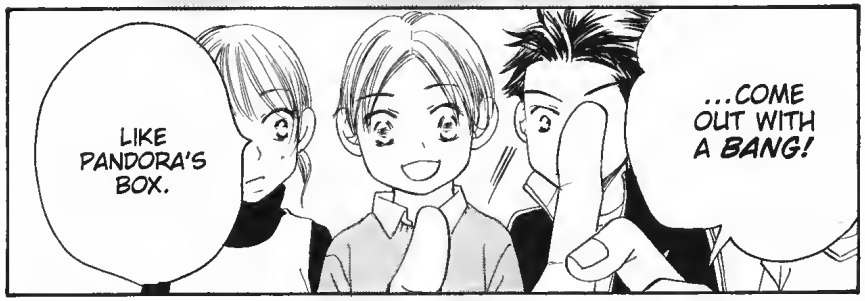
THESE ARE THE CHOICES. WE'LL DECIDE BY VOTING.
-CINDERELLA
-SNOW WHITE
-THE NUTCRACKER
-TEBUKURO
CHRISTMAS PLAYS

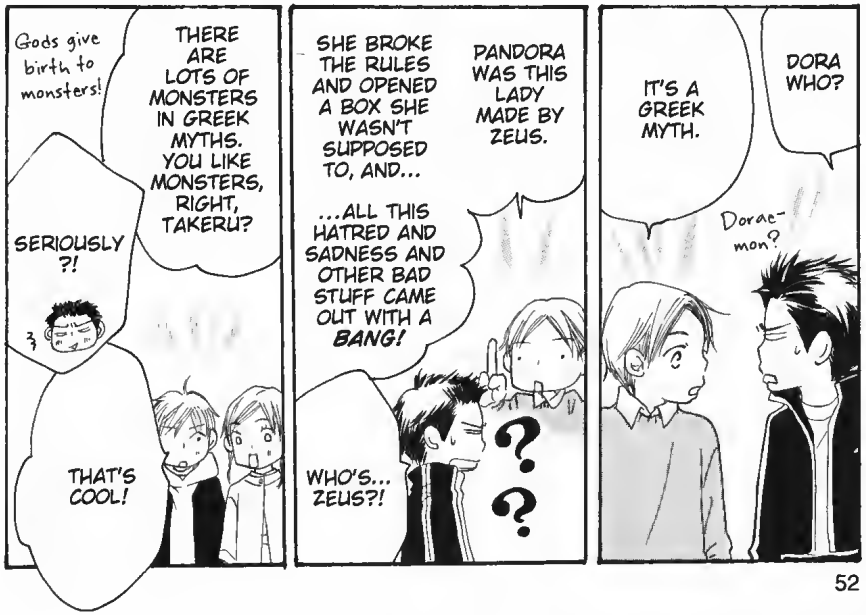
IT'S A CHRIST-MAS PLAY!!!
WHY DOES THE PLAY HAFTA BE ABOUT PRINCESSES AND GIRLY STUFF? I WANNA KILL BAD MONSTERS OR SOMETHING!!
These plays stink!
DAIGO ...!!
HUH ?!
I DON'T LIKE ANY OF THEM!!


SOB
I'm so glad I became a teacher!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS... BUT IF EVERYONE WANTS TO...
DAIGO!
YOU'RE SUCH A CRYBABY.
DON'T CRY, DAIGO.
CHEER UP!
Me too! Me three!
Huh? Can we? I wanna do it too!
WHY DON'T WE DO THAT STORY FOR CHRISTMAS?!
Pandora's Box!

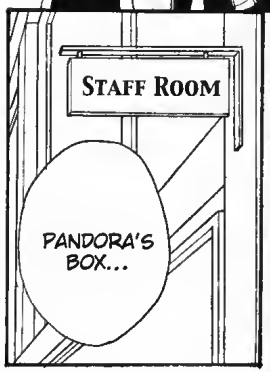

KARIN...
...WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PANDORA?
ME?
WHA-A-AT?!!
So who's this Zeus guy again...?
The main character. Sort of..
YOU'LL MAKE A GOOD ZEUS.
I'LL BE THE MONSTER !!
Just like a big boss
ROAR
WHO SHOULD BE PANDORA?

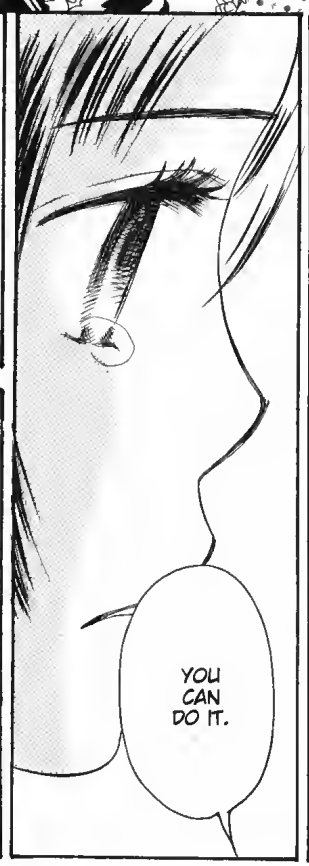

EVERY-THING YOU LIKED...
THE FRIENDS YOU FOUGHT ...
THE THINGS THAT MADE YOU SAD...
ALL THOSE OLD MEMORIES...
EVERYTHING YOU STRUGGLED WITH...


LIKE PANDORA'S BOX.
...COME OUT WITH A BANG!


Gods give birth to monsters!
THERE ARE LOTS OF MONSTERS IN GREEK MYTHS. YOU LIKE MONSTERS, RIGHT, TAKERU?
SERIOUSLY ?!
THAT'S COOL!
SHE BROKE THE RULES AND OPENED A BOX SHE WASN'T SUPPOSED TO, AND...
...ALL THIS HATRED AND SADNESS AND OTHER BAD STUFF CAME OUT WITH A BANG!
PANDORA WAS THIS LADY MADE BY ZEUS.
WHO'S... ZEUS?!
IT'S A GREEK MYTH.
DORA WHO?
Dorae-mon?

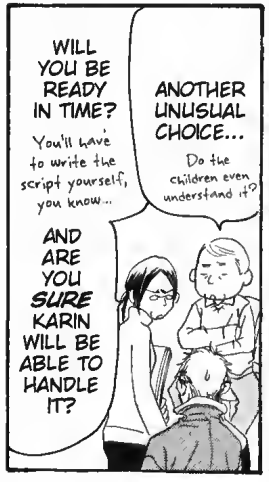
DAIGO, YOU'RE SCARING HER...
I'M NOT A GERM!!
SQUIRM
FIDGET
CLAMBER
SQUIRM

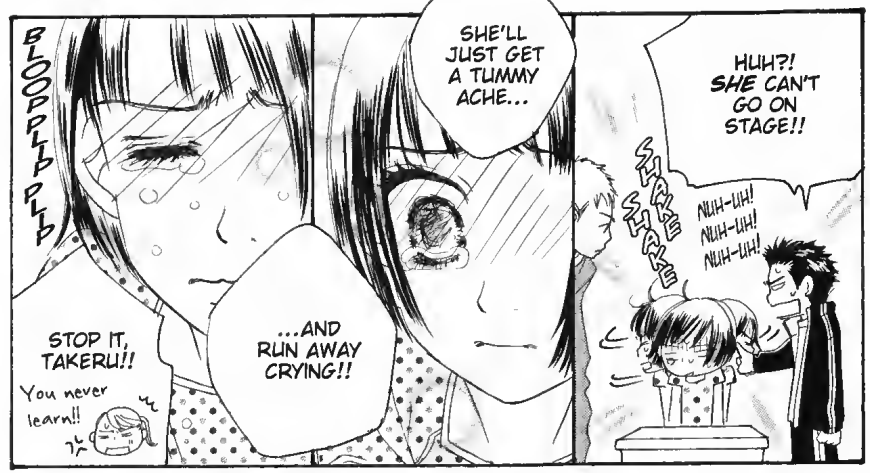

STAFF ROOM
PANDORA'S BOX...

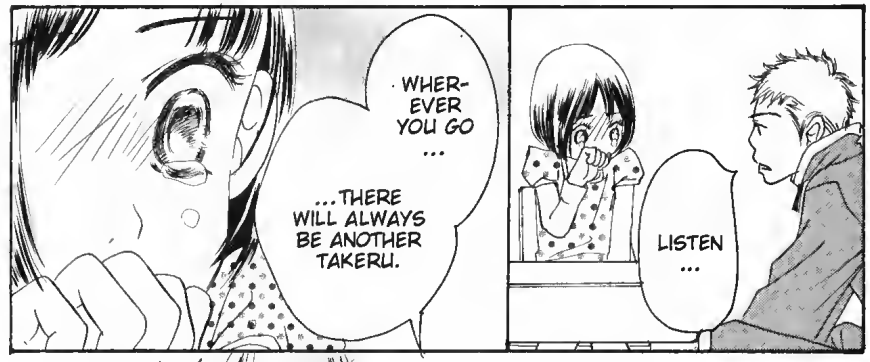

YOU CAN DO IT.

EVERYONE WILL BACK YOU UP.
YEP!!
Come on, Karin!
RIGHT, GUYS?

WILL YOU GIVE IT A TRY?


WILL YOU BE READY IN TIME?
You'll have to write the script yourself, you know...
ANOTHER UNUSUAL CHOICE...
Do the children even understand it?
AND ARE YOU SURE KARIN WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE IT?


BLOOPPLIPPLIP
STOP IT, TAKERU!!
You never learn!!
SHE'LL JUST GET A TUMMY ACHE...
...AND RUN AWAY CRYING!!
HUH?! SHE CAN'T GO ON STAGE!!
STRAIGHTEN STRAIGHTEN
NUH-UH! NUH-UH! NUH-UH!


WHER-EVER YOU GO ...
...THERE WILL ALWAYS BE ANOTHER TAKERU.
LISTEN ...

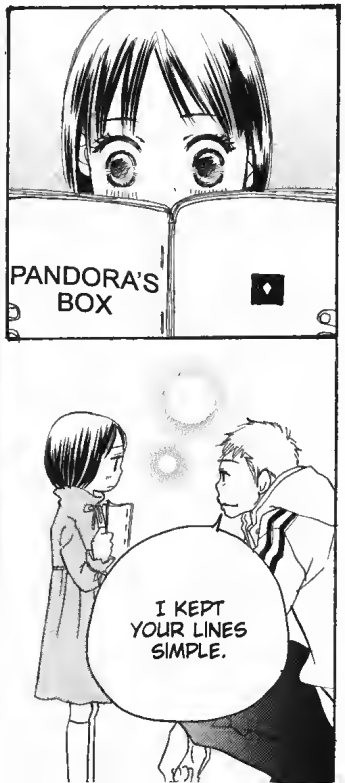
MORE AND MORE TAKERUS!
FOR-EVER!!
IF YOU DON'T FACE YOUR FEARS NOW, THEY'LL ONLY GET WORSE!

IN JUNIOR HIGH OR AT WORK ...
...TAKERU 2 AND TAKERU 3...
...WILL BE WAITING.

"...AND THAT WAS... HOPE."
"BUT ONE THING REMAINED ..."
...IN THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE BOX..."
"PANDORA WAS CURIOUS, SO SHE OPENED THE BOX..."
...RELEASING ALL MANNER OF CALAMITIES— HATRED, DOUBT, HUNGER, AND INSANITY..."

JUST STAND UP STRAIGHT ...
...AND DO THE BEST YOU CAN.

DON'T TRY TOO HARD.


PANDORA'S BOX
I KEPT YOUR LINES SIMPLE.

IT'S ALWAYS THE IRRESPONSIBLE GUYS WHO TALK THE BIGGEST!
STAB
STAB

I'LL BE THERE TO SUPPORT HER.
I'LL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHATEVER HAPPENS.
IF SHE MESSES UP IN FRONT OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL SHE'LL BE TRAUMATIZED!
THIS ISN'T ABOUT PROVING SOMETHING TO YOURSELF, IS IT?

I'm getting nowhere ...
No, that won't work ...
ARGH
ARGH

I've never written a play before!

Family feuds, everyone popping out babies...
GREEK MYTHS ARE PRETTY VIOLENT... AND RISQUÉ.
I'VE GOT TO KEEP IT SIMPLE AND EDUCATIONAL ...
PLUS, IT HAS TO BE FUN AND CHRISTMASSY!!
Impossible!!

ANOTHER TEACHER GOT ON MY CASE ABOUT IT...
My only defense is if things go well!

PANDORA'S BOX...?
FLIP
GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Time Capsule Letter

Come to think of it, I've never buried a time capsule myself. As I was writing this story, I thought I'd really like to do that someday.

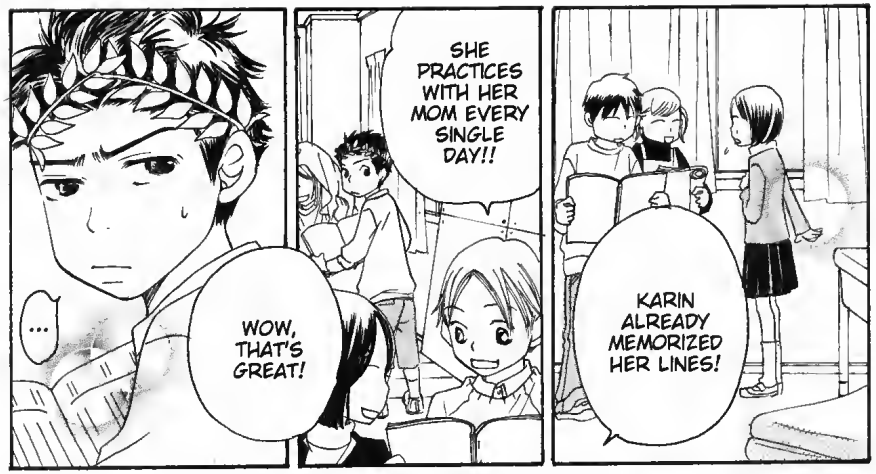
The main characters in this volume are in their thirties... even though this is a shojo manga...

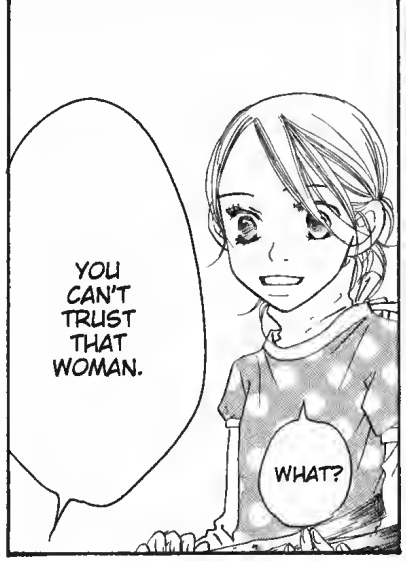
Someday I'd like to travel into space! I hope in the future it's possible for people like me to do that.

- ♀ -

The other bonus story, "Summer, Age 19," was for a special supplement to Betsucomi. It was intended to be a side story, so it doesn't show any particularly important events. And it ended up placed at the very end of the last graphic novel. Sorry about that!

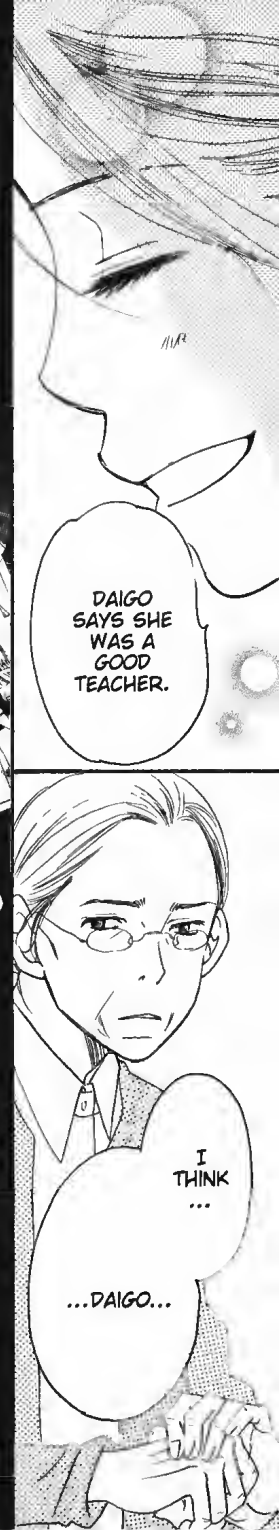
WHEN I WAS A CHILD, TEACHERS WERE STERN.
IT NEVER OCCURRED TO US TO HAVE *FUN* WITH THE STUDENTS.
BUT I'LL BET YOU REMEMBER...
...EVERYTHING YOUR TEACHERS TOLD YOU.
Good or bad...



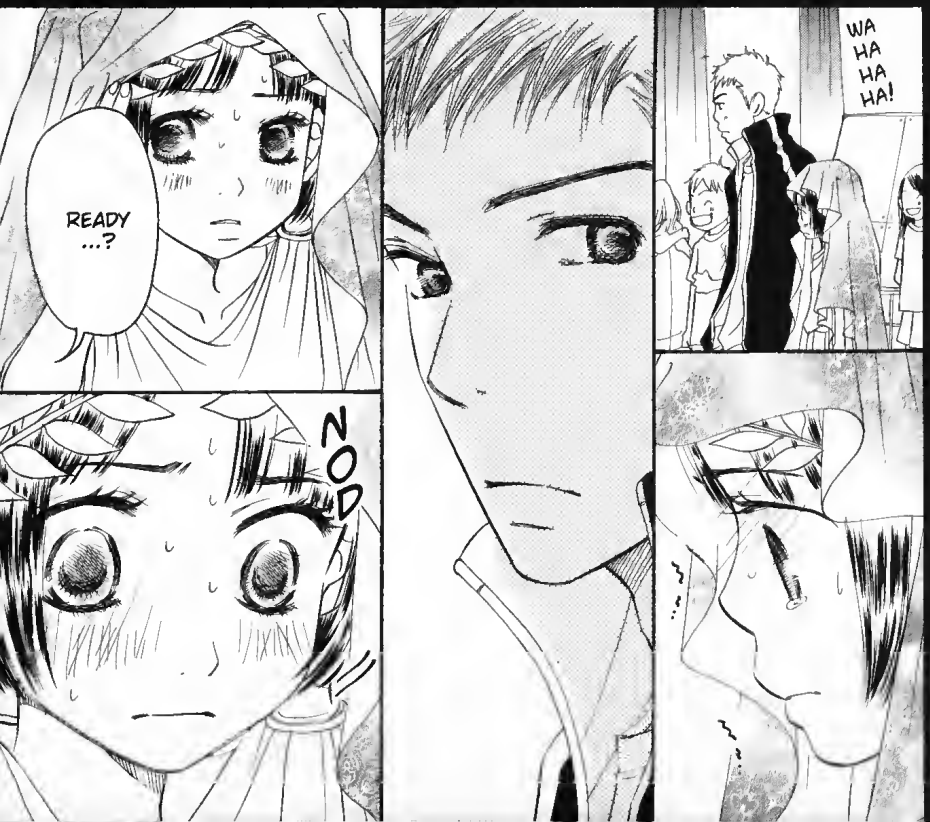


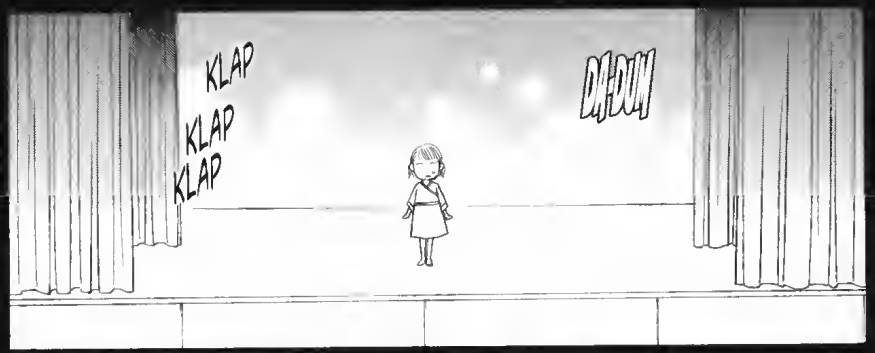
EVERYONE KNOWS...

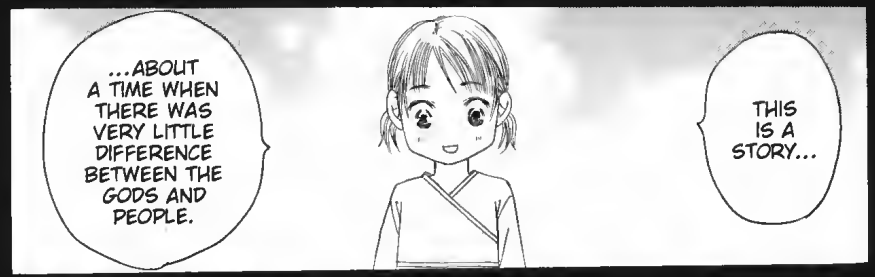
...MRS. KODA IS A LIAR.



I AM ZEUS, THE GOD OF THE GODS!!
KRA KOOM
I GUESS I'LL GO PICK ON THOSE STUPID HUMANS TODAY!!
AD LIB
WA HA HA HA HA
GO, TAKERU!!


READY ...?
NOD
WA HA HA HA!


KLAP KLAP KLAP
DA-DUM


...ABOUT A TIME WHEN THERE WAS VERY LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GODS AND PEOPLE.
THIS IS A STORY...

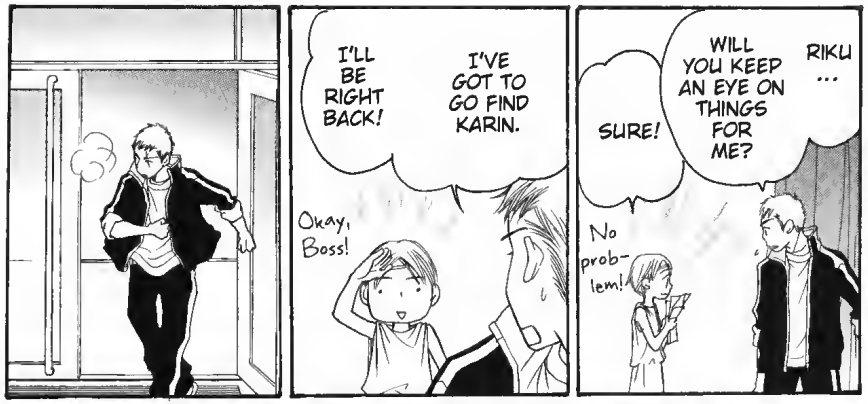
SUFFERING DIDN'T EXIST!
...THERE WAS NO ILLNESS, HARDSHIP, HUNGER, OR SADNESS.
ON EARTH, WHERE PEOPLE LIVED...
DA-DUM
KLAP KLAP KLAP

MY...
...NAME IS... PANDORA.
You can do it!
MY NAME IS PANDORA.
PANG
YAY!
KLAP KLAP KLAP

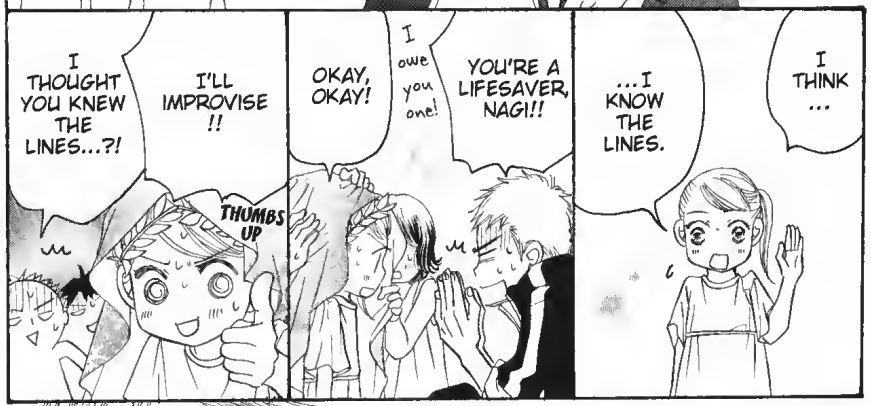
ZEUS DECIDED TO PUNISH THE HUMANS.
HE ORDERED HEPHAESTUS ...
...TO CREATE A FEMALE HUMAN BY KNEADING TOGETHER EARTH AND WATER.
KNEAD KNEAD KNEAD KNEAD KNEAD
FLAP
WOW!
HOW CUTE!
KYAP KYAP KYAP KYAP

SPSSSSH
WAAAH...
SOB
SPLASH
SPLASH
DON'T WORRY!
WE DON'T HAVE A MINUTE!
SHE'LL BE BACK ANY MINUTE NOW!
MURMUR MURMUR
What'll we do?
Calm down, everyone!!
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?!
OKAY, OKAY...
THIS IS MY RESPONSIBILITY, SO...
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO FIND A SUBSTITUTE FOR PANDORA...
J-JUST...
...HOLD ON A SEC'!
KARIN HASN'T COME BACK YET!!

DO YOU NEED TO USE THE RESTROOM?
CAN YOU MAKE IT BACK IN TIME FOR YOUR ENTRANCE...?
NOD
KARIN...
...DOES YOUR STOMACH HURT?
KLK
FLUSSSH
RESTROOM
WA HA HA HA!
NOD
SPSSSH
SPLASH SPLASH SPLASH
SPLASH
DASH

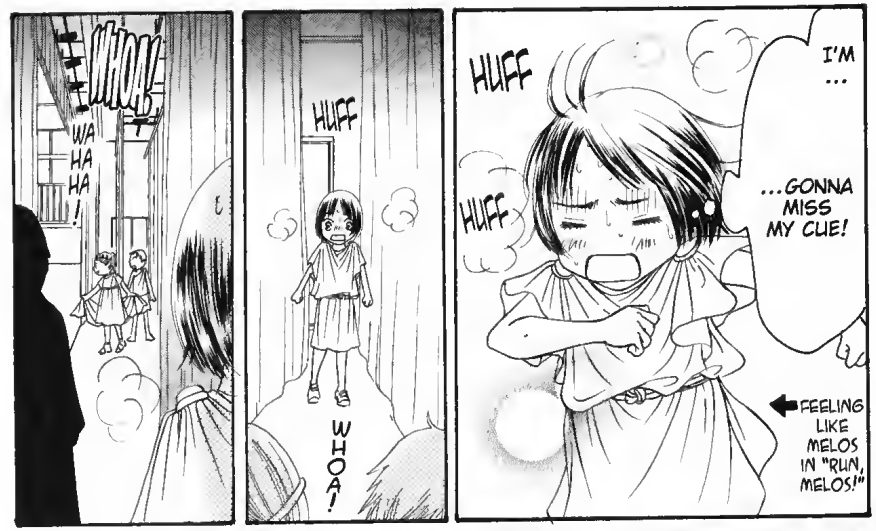

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
I'VE GOT TO GO FIND KARIN.
Okay, Boss!
RIKU ...
WILL YOU KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS FOR ME?
SURE!
No prob-lem!

DA DUM
THAT DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT...
...I'LL BE PANDORA !!!


I THOUGHT YOU KNEW THE LINES...?!
I'LL IMPROVISE !!
THUMBS UP
OKAY, OKAY!
I owe you one!
YOU'RE A LIFESAVER, NAGI!!
...I KNOW THE LINES.
I THINK ...

This is turning into a comedy skit...!!
That's hilarious, Nagi!
GYA HA HA!
PANDORA... CHANGED.
REALLY?
HA HA HA
WA HA HA

RIKU!
GIRLS
SHE'S NOT HERE ...
DON'T THINK SO.
DID KARIN COME BACK...?
WHERE IS SHE?!
OR HERE.


WHOA!
WA HA HA!
HUFF
WHOA!
HUFF
HUFF
I'M ...
...GONNA MISS MY CUE!
FEELING LIKE MELOS IN "RUN, MELOS!"

Nice job, Pandora!

YAAY!

BUT...
...ONE THING REMAINED...
...IN THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE BOX.
IT WAS... HOPE!
KICK

AND ZEUS SAID, "YOU MUST NEVER OPEN THAT BOX!"
UH-OH...
...WE'RE GETTING TO THE LAST SCENE!
PANDORA WAS CURIOUS, SO SHE OPENED THE BOX...
HERE I GO!! WOO-HOO!!
TUNK
YAO!
HA HA HA HA HA!
AND ALL MANNER OF EVIL SPRANG INTO THE WORLD.
OH! SICK-NESS ...
...HATRED, SADNESS ...
OH... NO...

M-M...
TA-DA

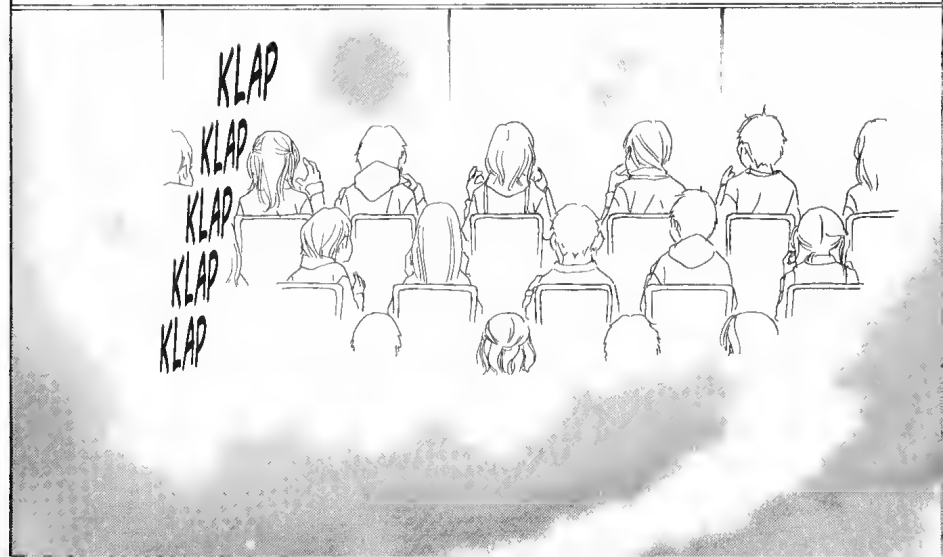
AH HA HA !
Wonder-ful !
That was great!
KLAP KLAP KLAP KLAP
KLAP
KLAP KLAP KLAP KLAP
KLAP KLAP KLAP KLAP KLAP

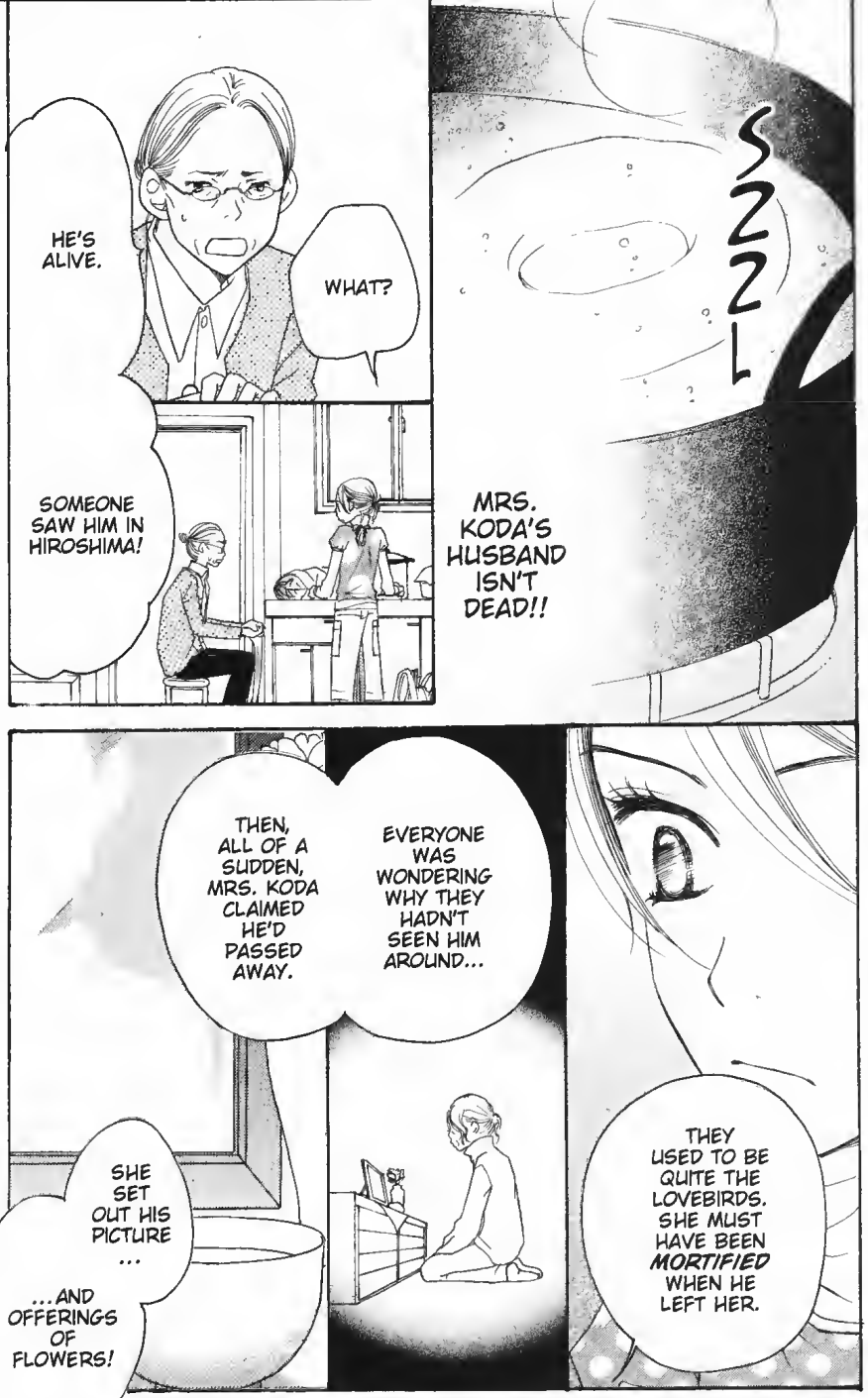
MERRY CHRISTMAS !!

I'M HO-OME!

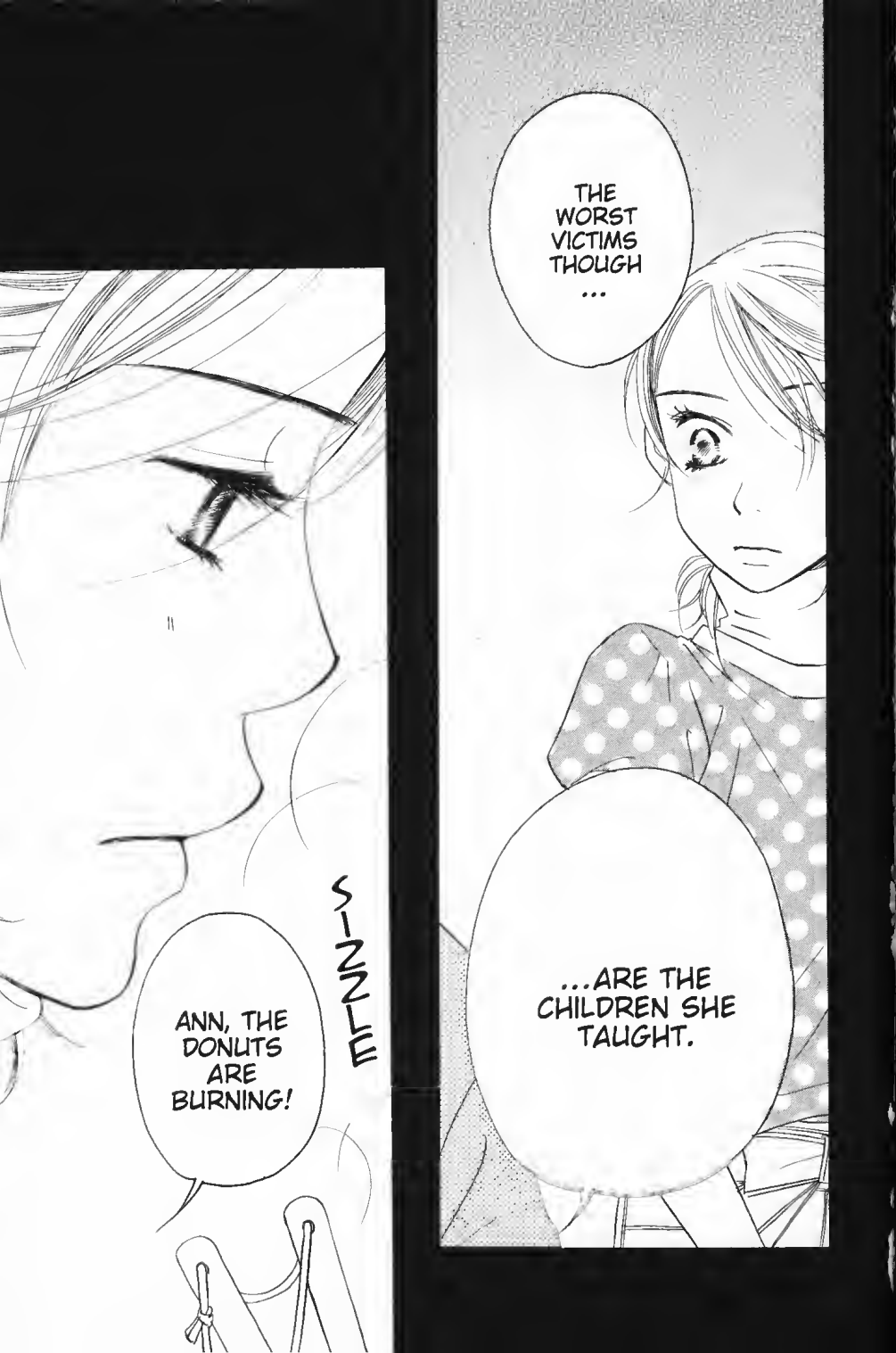
W-WHAT'S GOING ON HERE...?
This is a surprise ...
YOU'RE KINDA OLD, BUT... YOU CAN JOIN IN IF YOU WANT.
WE'RE CELEBRATING !!
HELLO, MRS. DAIGO !
HI, ANN!! WELCOME BACK!!

KLAP
KLAP
KLAP
KLAP


KLAP
KLAP
KLAP
KLAP
KLAP


HE'S ALIVE.
WHAT?
SOMEONE SAW HIM IN HIROSHIMA!
SIZZL
MRS. KODA'S HUSBAND ISN'T DEAD!!
THEN, ALL OF A SUDDEN, MRS. KODA CLAIMED HE'D PASSED AWAY.
EVERYONE WAS WONDERING WHY THEY HADN'T SEEN HIM AROUND...
SHE SET OUT HIS PICTURE ...
...AND OFFERINGS OF FLOWERS!
THEY USED TO BE QUITE THE LOVEBIRDS. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN MORTIFIED WHEN HE LEFT HER.

LADY, I'M HUNGRY!
YEAH!
Class 4-1 is Number 1!
FITS RIGHT IN WITH THE KIDS...
Yeah they do.
They know
DO YOUR PARENTS KNOW YOU'RE HERE?
You sure this is all right?
PHEW
"OLD" ...?
Oh, okay...
AH, SWEET SUCCESS! SUCCESS!!
SO THE PLAY WENT WELL?
...and that was when I saw Karin and...
YIPPEE!!
THEN... LET'S MAKE DONUTS!
SNNL
Well, thank you! ♡
I WANNA HELP!
ME TOO!

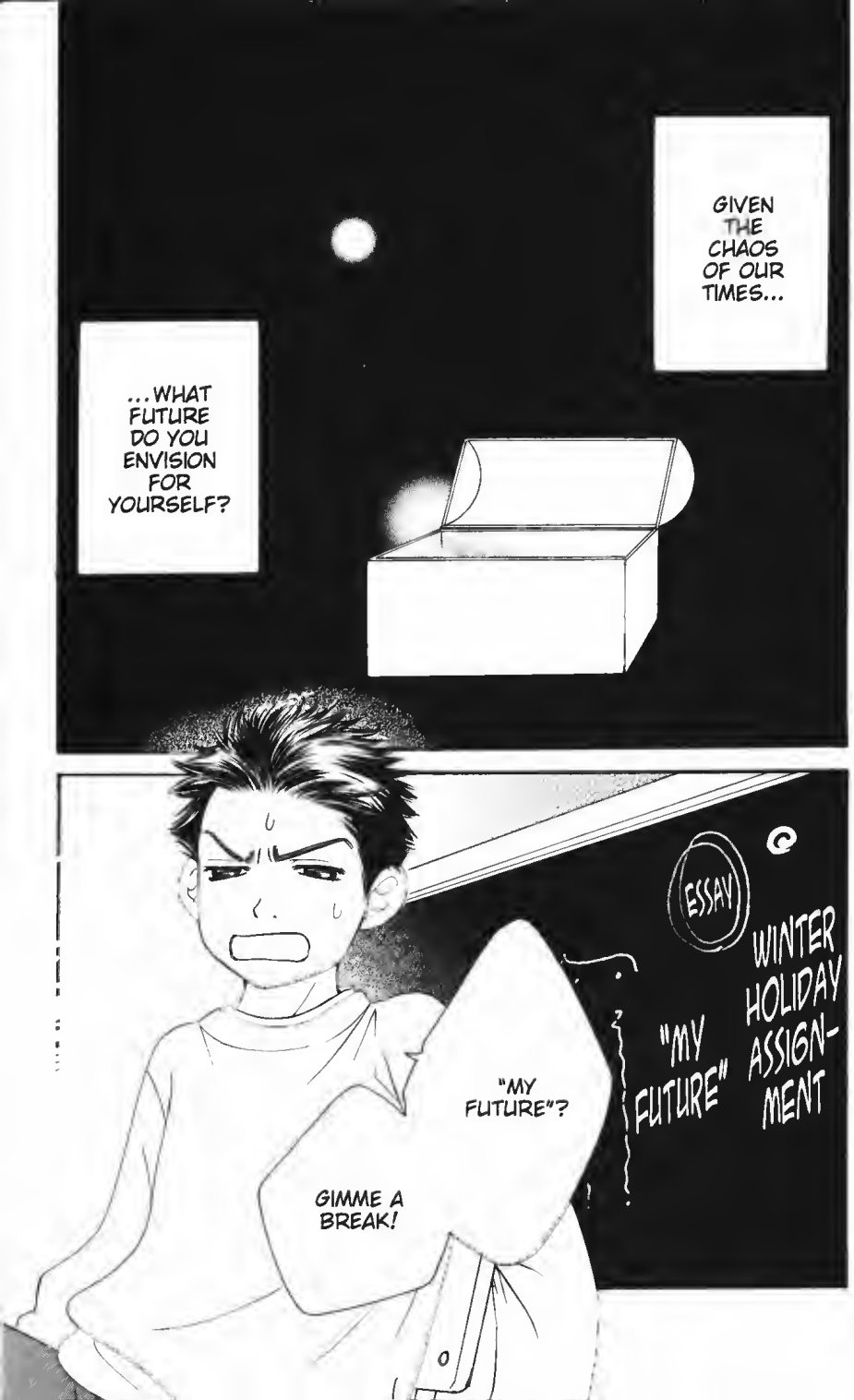

THE WORST VICTIMS THOUGH ...
...ARE THE CHILDREN SHE TAUGHT.
SIZZLE
ANN, THE DONUTS ARE BURNING!

IT'S A HORRIBLE LIE.
AND BY A TEACHER, NO LESS!
NO ONE AROUND HERE BELIEVES A THING SHE SAYS ANYMORE.
SHE LIES...
...DECEIVES ...
...AND TRICKS PEOPLE.
IT'S A DISGRACE!
MAYBE THAT MAN IN HIRO-SHIMA ...
... WASN'T REALLY HER HUS-BAND.
HE SAID THEIR RELATION-SHIP HAD BEEN ROCKY FOR YEARS.
THE LADY NEXT DOOR TALKED TO HIM. THERE'S NO MISTAKE.

Time Capsule, Part 1 * The End

TIME CAPSULE

PART TWO


GIVEN THE CHAOS OF OUR TIMES...
...WHAT FUTURE DO YOU ENVISION FOR YOURSELF?
ESSAY
WINTER HOLIDAY ASSIGN-MENT
"MY FUTURE"
"MY FUTURE"?
GIMME A BREAK!

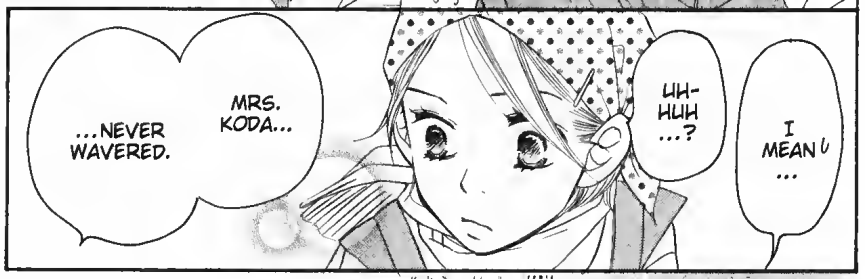
THE MALLET AND PESTLE ARE IN PRETTY ROUGH SHAPE.
ARE YOU SURE THIS'LL WORK?
MAKING MOCHI WITH A MALLET AND PESTLE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF JAPANESE CULTURE!
DAD! THAT'S NO WAY TO MAKE MOCHI!
It's traditional!
I SEE.
How old-fashioned...
GREAT.
I'll give you a hand.
I THINK I'VE GOT A STEAMER IN THE SHED SOMEPLACE.
I'll go hunt for it.
WHUMP
Umph.
Wow! It's big!
THEY'LL DO.
Cool!
AUTOMATIC MOCHI MAKER
...WHY DON'T YOU JUST USE MY MOCHI MACHINE? IT'S A LOT EASIER.
And automatic!
I'M GLAD YOU'LL PUT THEM TO USE, BUT...

TAKERU...
...QUIT PARROTING WHAT YOU'VE HEARD ON TV.
NOTHING IS CERTAIN! A DARK CLOUD HOVERS OVER US ALL!!
WE'RE AN AGING SOCIETY POPULATED BY OLD FARTS!!
JAPAN DOESN'T HAVE A FUTURE !!
NO.
WRITE IT BY HAND.
DAIGO, CAN WE USE A COMPUTER?
UGH...
ESSAY
"MY FUTURE"
GIVE THE TOPIC SOME THOUGHT AND USE YOUR OWN WORDS.
YOUR PAPERS ARE DUE RIGHT AFTER THE BREAK.
...TODAY!
...WHY DON'T WE GO...
YAAAY
DAD SAID YOU CAN COME ANYTIME.
WELL THEN...
WHEN ARE WE GONNA GO... YOU KNOW WHAT?
HEY, DAIGO!
HM?

THAT TELESCOPE ...
HEY, YOU'VE GOT A GOOD EYE!
...COST 100,000 YEN.
It's a beaut'!!
WHAT?!
I'M DONE WITH IT.
YOU WANT IT, IT'S YOURS.
100,000 YEN?!!
WOW!
How many months of rice does that come out to?
BEHAVE YOUR-SELVES !!!
HEY, I WANT THIS!!!
WOW! YOU'RE LUCKY, RIKU!!
I'll take this, okay?!
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE

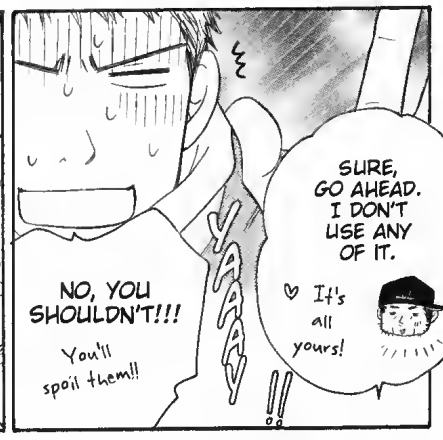
SOFT
BAKER'S KITCHEN
OH...
IT'S LIKE A SECOND-HAND STORE IN HERE!
So many appli-ances!
Oh I've always wanted that game!
Now where could it be?
Hmm ...
WHOA ...
THAT DARN THING MAKES TOO MUCH NOISE.
I don't use it anymore.
...A BREAD MAKER! ANN WANTS ONE OF THESE.
We can't afford it though.
Wow! So much stuff!
WOW ...
HIP-BUB
What a spend-thrift!
THANKS, SON.
DAD LIKES TO BUY STUFF.
He's a big spender!
HEH HEH
IT WASN'T A COMPLIMENT!

I THINK YOU DID THE RIGHT THING.
BUT I DEFERRED THE PROBLEM TO THEIR PARENTS.
I'm not against recycling, but...
SPLASH
SPLASH
SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
I SAID, "IF YOUR PARENTS GIVE YOU PERMISSION...
...IT'S OKAY."


...NEVER WAVERED.
MRS. KODA...
UH-HUH...?
I MEAN...

SHE WAS SO... CONFIDENT.
I BELIEVED EVERYTHING SHE TOLD ME.
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TIME CAPSULE
SHE WAS ALWAYS...
...SO SURE OF HERSELF.

BECAUSE SOME OF THESE THINGS ARE EXPENSIVE.
Put that down!
WHY NOT?
Here, this is for you
THEN I'LL TAKE THIS INSTEAD.
It's cheaper.
GRAAH!
Gimme!


NO, YOU SHOULDN'T!!!
You'll spoil them!!
YAAAY!!
SURE, GO AHEAD. I DON'T USE ANY OF IT.
It's all yours!

DON'T BE A PARTY POOPER!!
TAKERU'S DAD SAID WE COULD HAVE THEM!
WE'RE RE-CYCLING!
HUH? I DON'T GET IT.
IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MONEY!!
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!!

SO...
...HOW'D YOU WORK IT OUT?

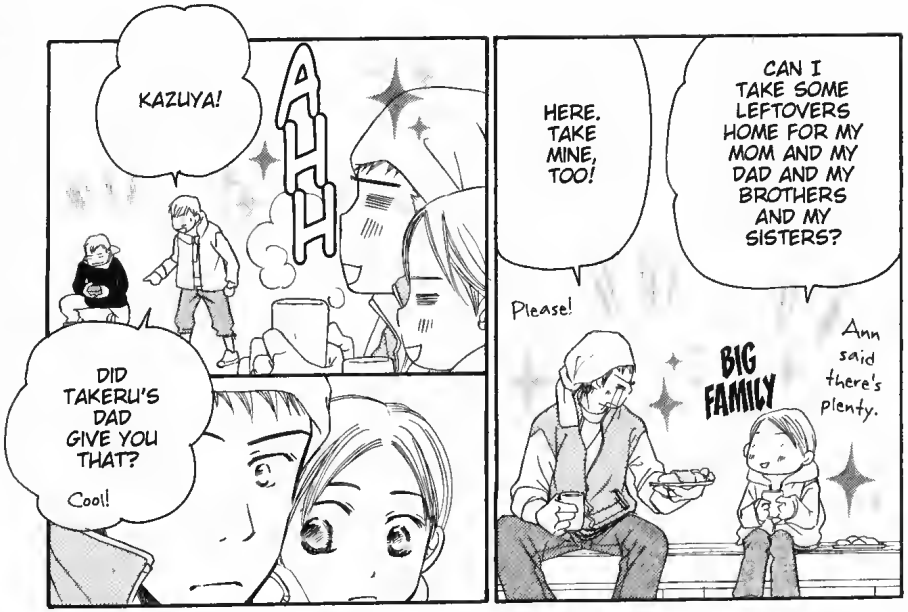
REALLY, I DON'T MIND...
PUT DOWN THAT STUFF, EVERYONE!!
ARRGH!
RRGH!
AW, YOU'RE NO FUN!

EEEE!
AH HA HA HA!
GYAAAAH!
YIPPEE!
KITA-MURA
MOCHI PARTY
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE HAVING FUN!
HELLO!
OH, I'M SORRY... ARE WE TOO NOISY?
NO, NOT AT ALL.
IT'S A SEASONAL TRADITION.
TUNK
Ooh! It's hot!
LOOK AT DAIGO'S OLD TEACHER!
HER HANDS ARE LIKE LEATHER!!
WAY BACK WHEN, EVERYONE USED TO POUND MOCHI.
NOWADAYS, THERE ISN'T A PLACE IN THE NEIGHBOR-HOOD THAT'LL REPAIR THE MALLET AND PESTLE...
ANN, THE RICE IS DONE!
The timer's ringing!

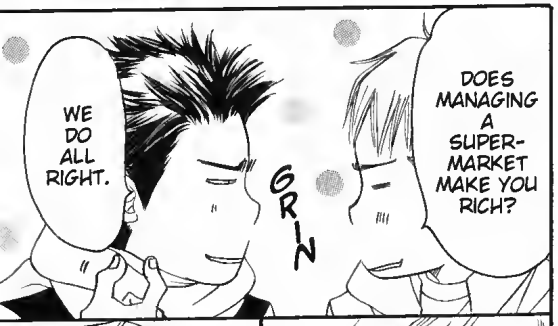
I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT, BUT...
...THE MORE I WASH THIS PESTLE, THE MORE IT SPLINTERS!
YEAH. THE MALLET TOO.
They're really old.
WHEN WILL I BECOME A TEACHER LIKE HER?
The kids make fun of me!
AH HA HA
MRS. KODA IS COMING OVER TO HELP.
OH!
I HAVEN'T POUNDED MOCHI SINCE THAT NEW YEAR'S AT THE TSUKISHIMAS' ...
ARE YOU SURE WE CAN MANAGE?
DON'T WORRY.
GYA HA HA HA!
WOO-HOO!
YAAAH!

"MRS. KODA'S HUSBAND ISN'T DEAD!!"
"HE'S ALIVE! SOMEONE SAW HIM IN HIROSHIMA !!"
"SHE WAS A GOOD TEACHER."
"SHE WAS ALWAYS HONEST WITH US AND TREATED US LIKE GROWN-UPS."
"IT'S A HORRIBLE LIE. AND BY A TEACHER, NO LESS!"
"THEY USED TO BE QUITE THE LOVEBIRDS. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN MORTIFIED WHEN IT ENDED."
"EVERYONE WAS WONDERING WHY THEY HADN'T SEEN HIM AROUND..."
"THEN, ALL OF A SUDDEN, MRS. KODA CLAIMED HE'D PASSED AWAY. SHE SET OUT HIS PICTURE AND OFFERINGS OF FLOWERS!"

I'M USED TO IT.
DOESN'T IT HURT...?
They're all red!
AH HA HA
THESE ARE THE HANDS OF A HARDWORKIN' GRANNY.
See?
CAREFUL! YOU'LL BURN YOURSELF!
IT'S HOT!
YOU'RE WOBBLING, DAIGO!!
AH HA HA HA!



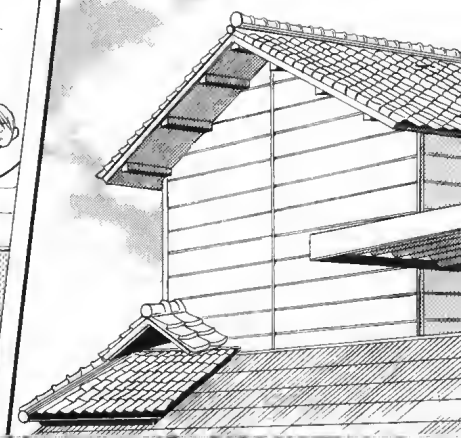
CAN I TAKE SOME LEFTOVERS HOME FOR MY MOM AND MY DAD AND MY BROTHERS AND MY SISTERS?
HERE. TAKE MINE, TOO!
Please!
BIG FAMILY
Ann said there's plenty.



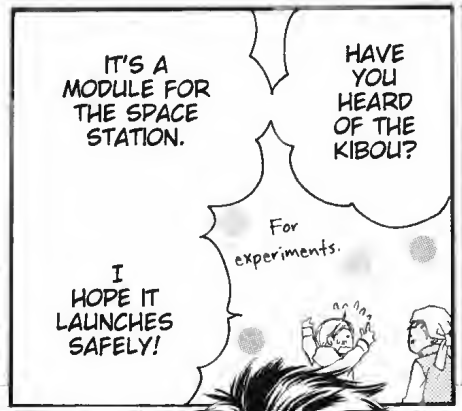
"THE WORST VICTIMS, THOUGH ...

...ARE THE CHILDREN SHE TAUGHT."

CHRP CHRP CHRP CHRP



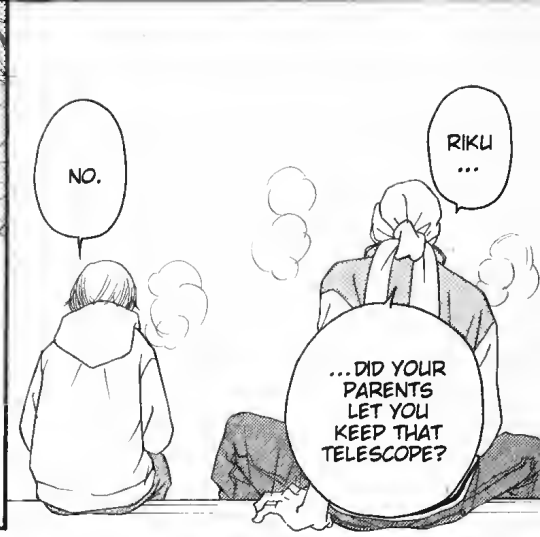
WHEN I GROW UP...
...I WANNA WORK AT THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION!

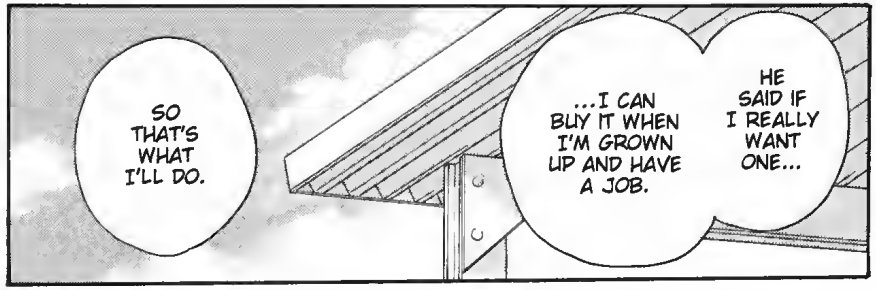

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE KIBOU?
For experiments.
IT'S A MODULE FOR THE SPACE STATION.
I HOPE IT LAUNCHES SAFELY!

YEAH. BUT THEY'RE BEHIND SCHEDULE ASSEMBLING IT.
What if they never finish it...?
WHOA! REALLY?!
Wow.

EVEN KINDER-GARTENERS KNOW THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
YOU'LL NEVER BE AN ASTRONAUT!
ARE YOU NUTS?!

...SO EXPEN-SIVE.
DAD SAID WE COULDN'T ACCEPT SOME-THING...

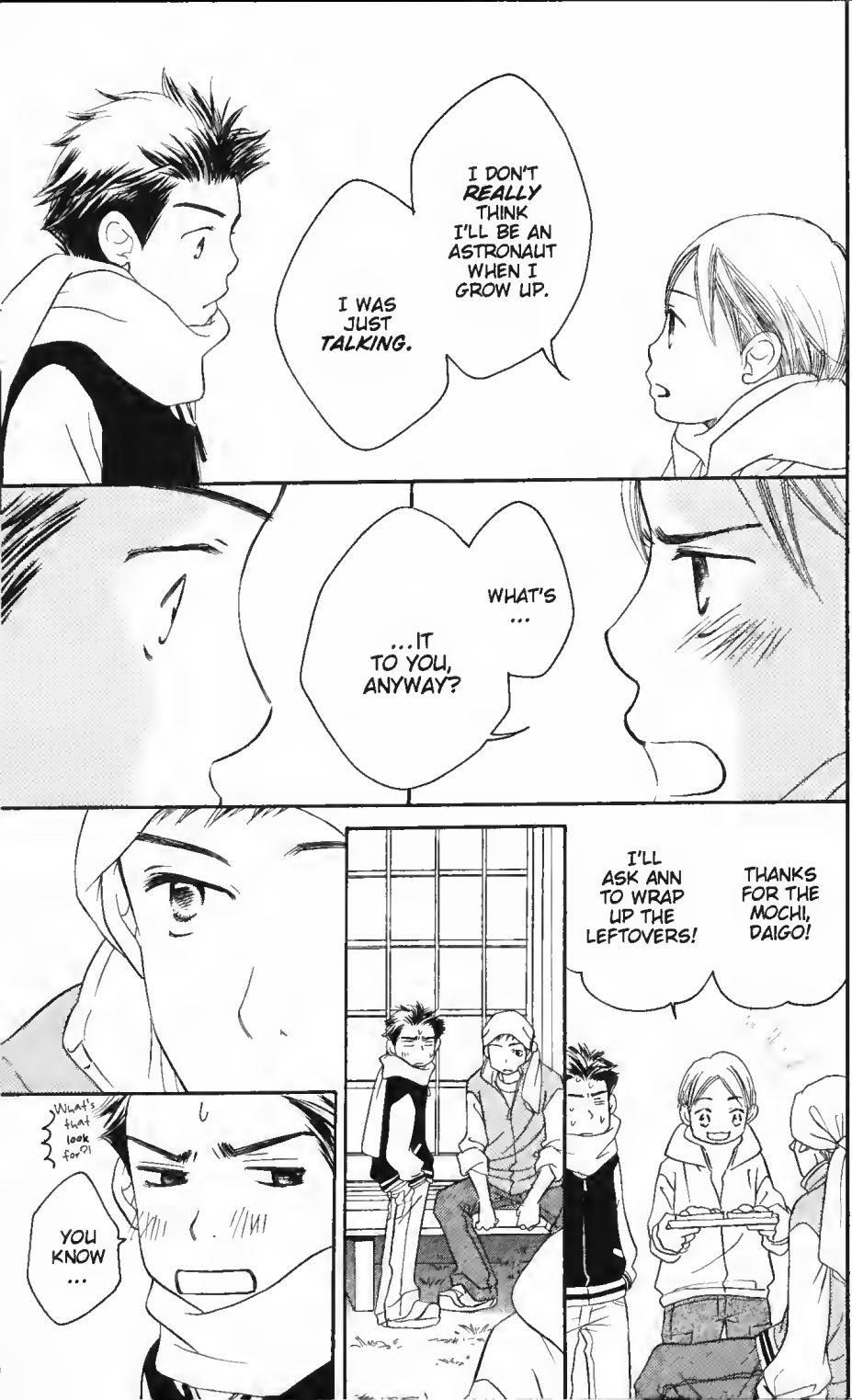

NO.
RIKU ...
...DID YOUR PARENTS LET YOU KEEP THAT TELESCOPE?


SO THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO.
...I CAN BUY IT WHEN I'M GROWN UP AND HAVE A JOB.
HE SAID IF I REALLY WANT ONE...

PROMISE YOU WON'T LAUGH...?
SURE.
UM...
JITTER JITTER

YOU MUST REALLY ...
...LIKE ASTRO-NOMY.
YEP!!

BESIDES, THE SCHOOL HAS ONE.
IT ISN'T AS NICE, BUT...
Better than nothing!
Good for you.


I DON'T *REALLY* THINK I'LL BE AN ASTRONAUT WHEN I GROW UP.
I WAS JUST *TALKING.*
WHAT'S ...
...IT TO YOU, ANYWAY?
THANKS FOR THE MOCHI, DAIGO!
I'LL ASK ANN TO WRAP UP THE LEFTOVERS!
What's that look for?!
YOU KNOW ...

BESIDES ...
...YOUR FAMILY IS *POOR!*
TAKERU!!
Don't be mean!
MY DAD SAYS IT COSTS A TON OF MONEY...
...TO BREAK INTO A COMPETITIVE FIELD.
PARROTING OTHERS AGAIN
YOU GOTTA PAY FOR A GOOD COLLEGE...
...AND STUDY A LOT AND...
YOUR PARENTS CAN'T EVEN AFFORD A TELESCOPE!
FORGET IT.
EVEN THEN, ONLY A FEW PEOPLE GET PICKED!!

RIKU!
TAKE-RU!!
Happy New Year!
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR, DAIGO!!
BE CAREFUL WALKING HOME!
"WHATEVER YOU GROW UP TO BE IS FINE WITH ME."
HMPH
DON'T FORGET ...
...TO WRITE YOUR ESSAYS!!
"IF YOU GET YOUR DREAM JOB..."
"JUST MAKE SURE YOU BECOME SOMEONE THAT YOU LIKE."

HOW DID IT MAKE YOU FEEL...?
DID YOU SEE THE LOOK ON HIS FACE?
...WHAT I SAID IS TRUE!
IT'S NOT ABOUT WHAT'S TRUE.
...DREAMS, HOPE, DISAPPOINT-MENT...
REALITY...
HMPH
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT TO THEM...
Take this home with you.
Thanks!
I DON'T WANT THE KIDS TO CONFUSE THEM.
IT'S SO FRUSTRA-TING!

...
SDSSSH
KLINK
IT WAS IN THE TIME CAPSULE.
TOK
IT MEANS A LOT TO ME.
I SHOULD BE CAREFUL WITH IT. IT'S GETTING OLD.
I'll take it off.
THAT RING...
OH...
MY LATE HUSBAND GAVE IT TO ME.
SDSSSH
UM...
...BUT ...
...IS IT TRUE THAT YOUR HUSBAND IS STILL ALIVE?
MAYBE IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS ...
MS. UENO TOLD ME.
EH?

"I...
IT TAKES COURAGE ...
...TO BELIEVE IN SOMEONE.
...BELIEVE IN ALL OF YOU."
"HAVE FAITH IN YOURSELF. BE AUTHENTIC."
"DON'T EVER LIE TO YOURSELF OR HIDE FROM THE TRUTH."
Tomorrow, we're cleaning the gutters.
Happy New Year!
Thanks for coming!
THANK YOU FOR THE MOCHI!
LOOKING FOR ANN? SHE'S INSIDE WITH MRS. KODA.
NEIGHBORS
CLANCE
Speaking of which...
HM?
SDSSSH
LOOK AT ALL THESE DISHES!
SHOULDN'T YOU BE GETTING HOME? IT'S LATE...
WELL, LET'S GET TO WORK!
SDSSSH
DON'T WORRY.
NO ONE'S WAITING FOR ME.

GRAB
GASP
THE BANDAGE ...
...IS COMING OFF.
SEE? YOU YOURSELF HAVE SOMETHING IN YOUR PAST THAT YOU'D LIKE TO ERASE AS WELL.
SPSSSH
YOUR WRIST...
SDSSSH
I ONLY WANT THE GOOD ONES.
THAT'S HOW I'M ABLE TO GO ON LIVING.
SDSSSH
I'M NO DIFFERENT.
I GOT RID OF MY BAD MEMORIES.

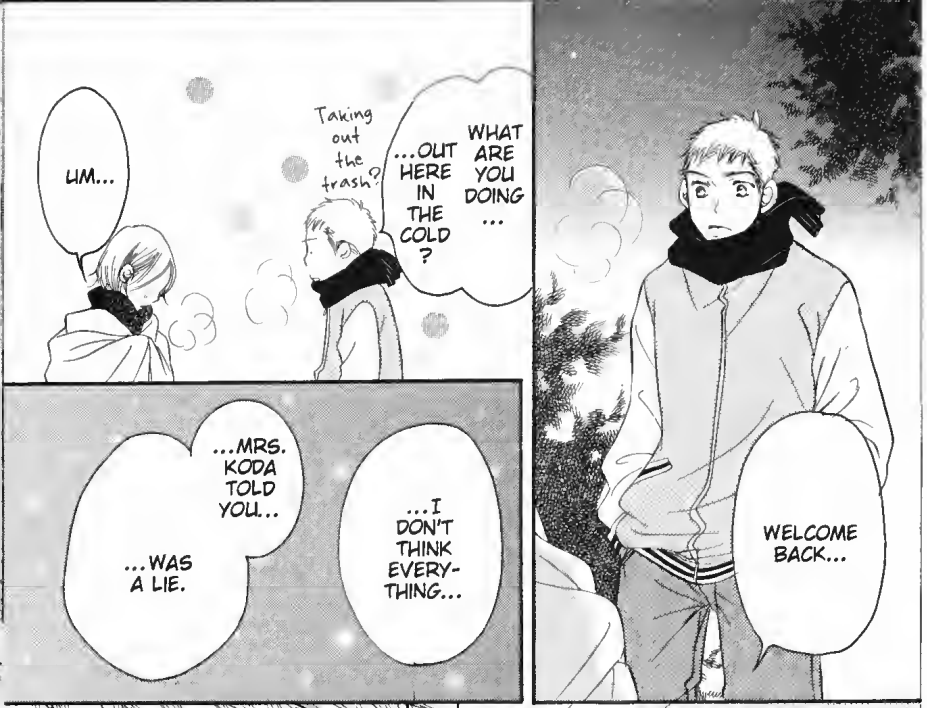
SHE SAID...
...HE LIVES IN HIROSHIMA.
MS. UENO?
...
NOD
SHE'S A REAL STICKLER, ISN'T SHE?
ALWAYS SEPARATING THE TRASH PERFECTLY, PASSING AROUND COMMUNITY BULLETINS ...
SHE LOVES TO GOSSIP!
I LIED.
MS. UENO IS RIGHT.
SDSSSH
MY HUSBAND IS ALIVE.
SDSSSH
SO WHY DO YOU—
KLINK
KLINK
I KNEW IT WOULD GET OUT SOMEDAY ...
I DON'T WANT MY FORMER PUPILS THINKING POORLY OF ME.
IT'S TOO BAD.

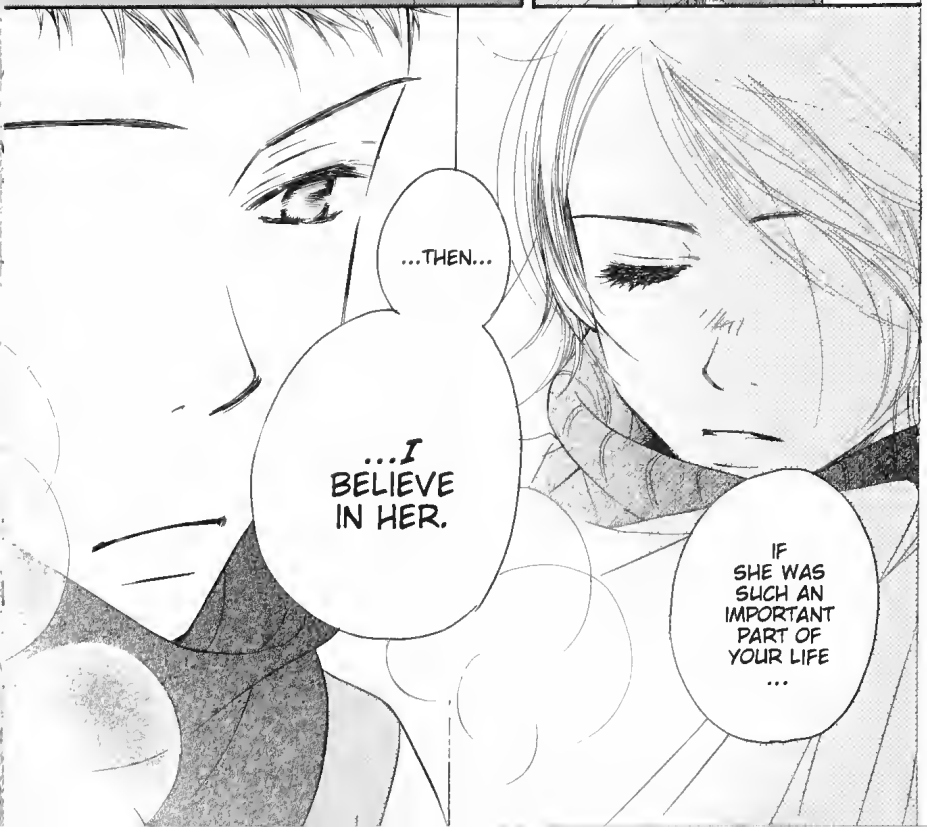
...I THOUGHT ADULTS KNEW EVERY-THING.
VROOM
WHEN I WAS A CHILD...
I WAS ALWAYS UNSURE OF MYSELF.
AFRAID TO MAKE DECISIONS ...
MY HUSBAND ENCOURAGED ME TO BE STRONG!
...YOU NEVER STOP DOUBTING.
THE TRUTH IS...
I DON'T THINK I WAS EVER COMPLETELY CERTAIN OF ANYTHING I TOLD YOU.

SSSSSH
DAIGO...
VROOM

ADULTS SHOULD KNOW BETTER.
WE'RE STILL MARRIED, TECHNI-CALLY.
WE LEFT EVERYTHING UNFINISHED.
HOW CHILDISH OF US.
JUST LIKE THAT?
YES. HE PROBABLY IS IN HIROSHIMA.
HE WENT TO SCHOOL THERE.
YOU SHOULD ...
I'M SORRY.
IT WAS IRRESPON-SIBLE OF ME.
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE BECOME A TEACHER.
...FORGET ME.
KODA
TAKAFUMI
KIMIKO
AS A TEACHER, I BEHAVED AS IF I HAD SO MUCH WISDOM.

ONE LITTLE THING LED TO THE NEXT...
...AND OUR ENTIRE RELATIONSHIP UNRAVELED.
I DON'T KNOW HOW IT STARTED ...
YOU MUST HAVE BEEN VERY CLOSE.
I THOUGHT SO...
I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE LIKE THAT FOREVER.
HE KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME.
HE WAS SO UNDER-STANDING.
THEN, ONE DAY, HE WANDERED OFF...
...AND NEVER CAME BACK.
I DIDN'T WANT TO FACE IT, SO I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING.
BUT INSIDE, IT WAS TEARING ME APART.
MAYBE I TOOK HIM FOR GRANTED.
BEFORE I KNEW IT, WE HAD GROWN APART.


UM...
Taking out the trash?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ...
...OUT HERE IN THE COLD?
WELCOME BACK...
...I DON'T THINK EVERY-THING...
...MRS. KODA TOLD YOU...
...WAS A LIE.


...THEN...
...I BELIEVE IN HER.
IF SHE WAS SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR LIFE ...

NO MORE CRYING!!

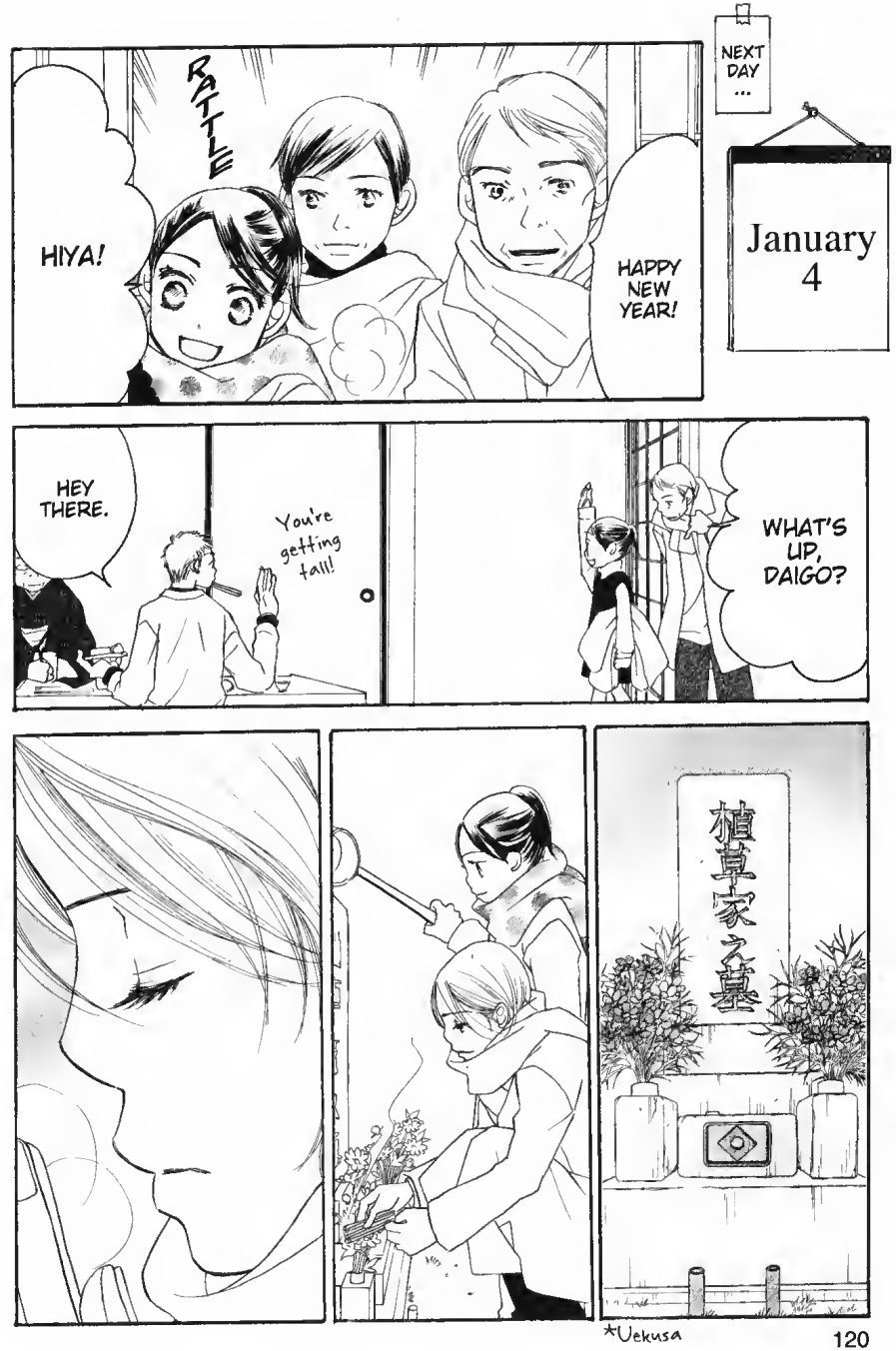
"THE TRICK IS TO BE SOMEONE THE CHILDREN WANT TO EMULATE."
I'm pretty simple.
"YOU BRAIN-WASHED ME WELL."
BATTLE
CLICK

TUNK

IS THAT WHAT HOPE IS...?
...THE SKY WILL BE BRIGHT AT NIGHT.
BUT AS LONG AS YOU'RE BY MY SIDE...
January 3
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!
RTTL
HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
WILL YOUR FATHER BE COMING TOO?
TOMORROW IS THE ANNIVERSARY OF MIWAKO'S DEATH.
THE WHOLE FAMILY WILL BE HERE.
YES.
Glad you could come!
COME ON IN!

YOU'VE BEEN WAITING OUT HERE FOR ME...JUST TO SAY THAT ?!
DOOFUS.
HEY!
"Doofus"...?
"MY HUSBAND ENCOURAGED ME TO BE STRONG."
...THINK I UNDERSTAND...
...WHY SHE LIED.
SOMETIMES THE GROUND UNDER YOUR FEET SHAKES...
...AND YOU GET LOST.
I...

COWARD!!

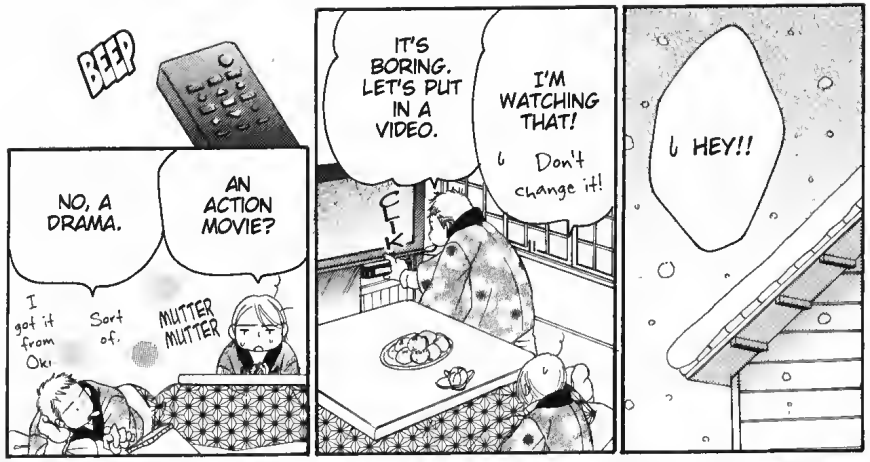

NEXT DAY ...
January 4
RATTLE
HIYA!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
HEY THERE.
You're getting tall!
WHAT'S UP, DAIGO?
植草家之墓

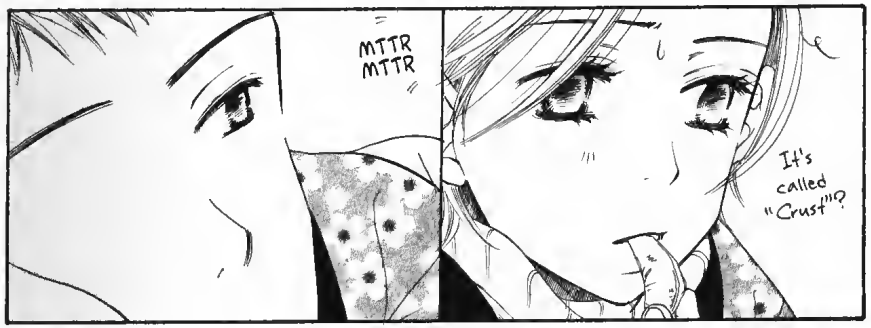
*Uekusa

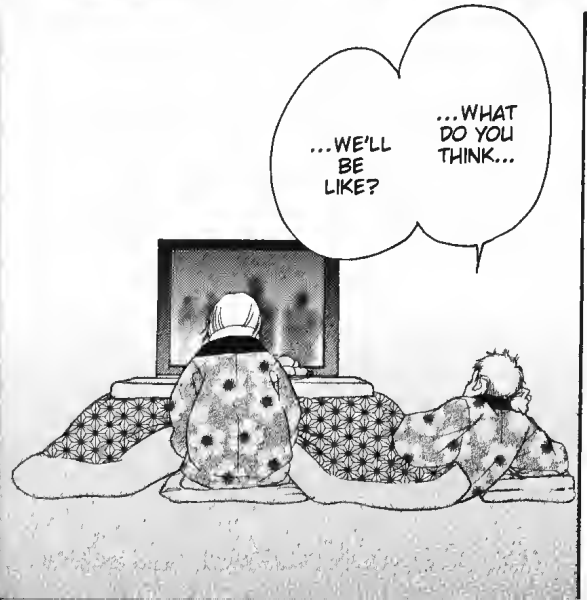
I WAS JUST THINKING ...
NAH.
...HOW OUR CELLS ARE ALWAYS REPLACING THEMSELVES.
WHY?
ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT IT?

THAT'S A LONELY THOUGHT.
...IS MY MEMORIES.
THE ONLY THING THAT CONNECTS THE *ME OF TODAY* WITH THE *ME OF TOMORROW*...

I HEAR CAT'S CRADLE HELPS.
REALLY?
Is that a video game?
...BETTER EXERCISE MY BRAIN...
...SO I DON'T LOSE MY MEMORY!
I...
GAH!
FIFTY?!
...I'LL BE *FIFTY*! IN TWENTY YEARS...
No-o-o!


BEEP
NO, A DRAMA.
AN ACTION MOVIE?
I got it from Oka.
Sort of.
MUTTER MUTTER
IT'S BORING. LET'S PUT IN A VIDEO.
I'M WATCHING THAT!
Don't change it!
CLICK
HEY!!


MTTR MTTR
It's called "Crust"?


...WE'LL BE LIKE?
...WHAT DO YOU THINK...

"ONE LITTLE THING LED TO ANOTHER ..."
IN TWENTY YEARS...
"I GUESS I TOOK HIM FOR GRANTED."

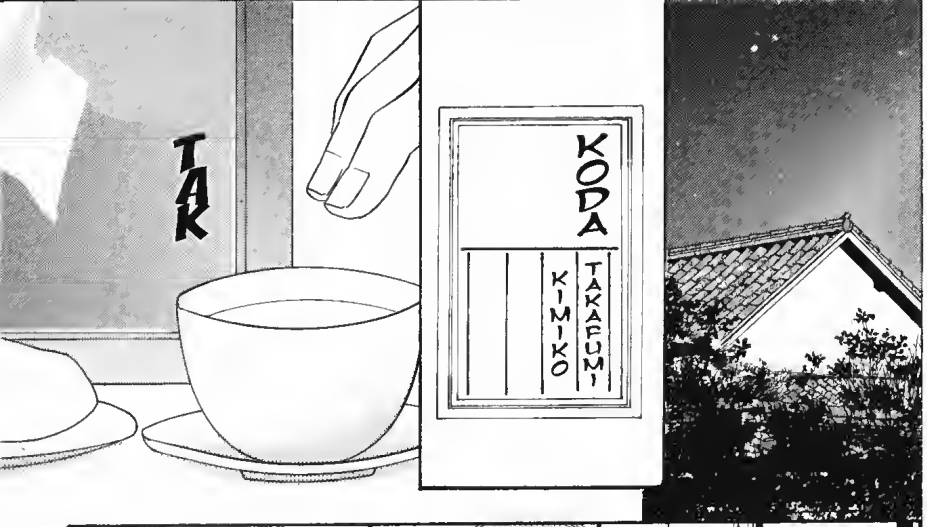
FWAP
O MORE
RYING!!
4-1 Daigo Kitamura
4-1 Daigo Kitamura

"NO MORE CRYING"?
NO MORE CRYING!!
OPENING CERE-MONY
TIME FOR ATTEND-ANCE.
Take your seats!
CONFIRMED.
?
What're you talking about?!
OKAY, GOT IT.
MORE RYING!!
Whoa!
GOT WHAT?
Weirdo.

I PUT EFFORT INTO THAT!
...OVER AND OVER...
I WANT TO REFLECT ON THEM ...
I WANT TO KEEP ALL MY MEMORIES.
THAT'S ...
...WHAT HELPS ME FACE THE FUTURE.
...BEFORE ALL MY CELLS ARE REPLACED.
THE SAD ONES...
THE HAPPY ONES...

MY FUTURE
TAKERU URASAWA
JAPAN HAS NO FUTURE!! I'M GOING OVERSEAS!!!
AHA HA HA!
THE END.
DID YOU FINISH YOUR ESSAY?
OF COURSE I DID! LOOK!!
Report to the office later.
JUMP
KLAK
Agh! YOU WON'T ACCEPT IT?
NOT ENOUGH WORDS. DO IT OVER.
Other-wise, it's not bad.
All right! Thanks!
IF YOU FORGOT YOUR ESSAY, MONDAY IS THE FINAL CUT-OFF.

I BET HE DIDN'T WRITE HIS ESSAY AND HE'S HOME FINISHING IT!
AHAHA
BWAHAHA
REALLY?
THAT'S STRANGE.
TAKERU'S ABSENT?
HMM...
CHAK
WOULD YOU PLEASE COLLECT THEM FOR ME?
YES?
NAGI!
OKAY, HAND IN YOUR PAPERS.
RTL
LOOK! IT'S TAKERU!!
You're late!
...
PASS THEM FORWARD, EVERY-ONE!
MY FUTURE
RIKU MORI


TAK
KODA
TAKAFUMI
KIMIKO

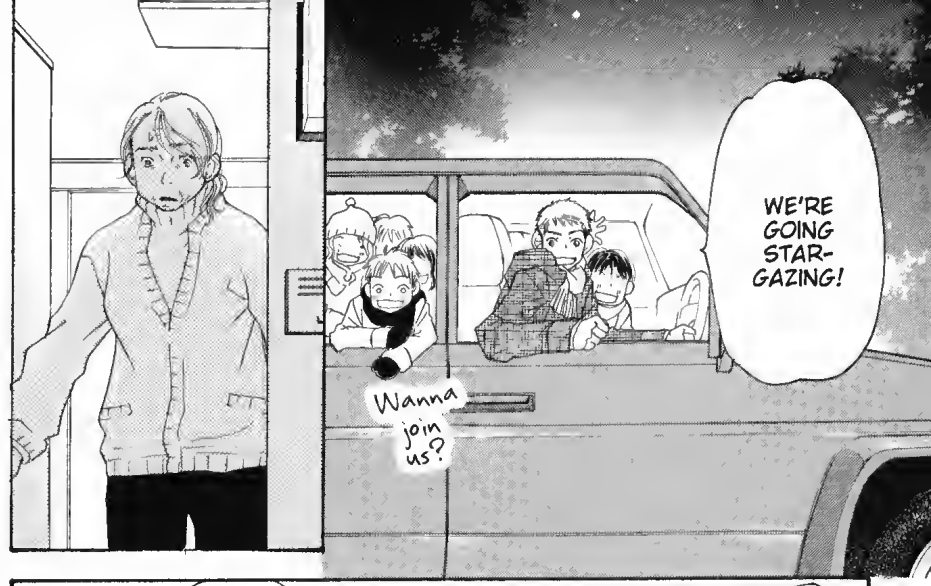
...
MRS. KODA?
HONK
HONK

THE TELESCOPE?!
The one I wanted...
I'M NOT GIVING IT TO YOU.

BUT YOU CAN BORROW IT...
...FOR A WHILE.

...WHY DON'T WE ALL...
...GO STARGAZING TONIGHT?!
HOORAY
Awesome!
WELL THEN...
Cool! Lucky you, Riku!

RIKU...
...DID YOU SEE IT?
IS THIS THE MOCHI WE MADE?
♡ It's yum!
UM... IT'S ALL BLURRY.
THE OSHIRUKO'S READY.
SHVR
SHVR
SHVR
IT'S FREEZING.
♪ Who cares about stars anyway?
OH! THERE IT IS!!
WOW!
It's amazing!
I'll bring my dad next time.
MY TURN! MY TURN!
LOOKS LIKE I COULD REACH OUT AND TOUCH 'EM!!
I guess that's what 100,000 yen buys you!

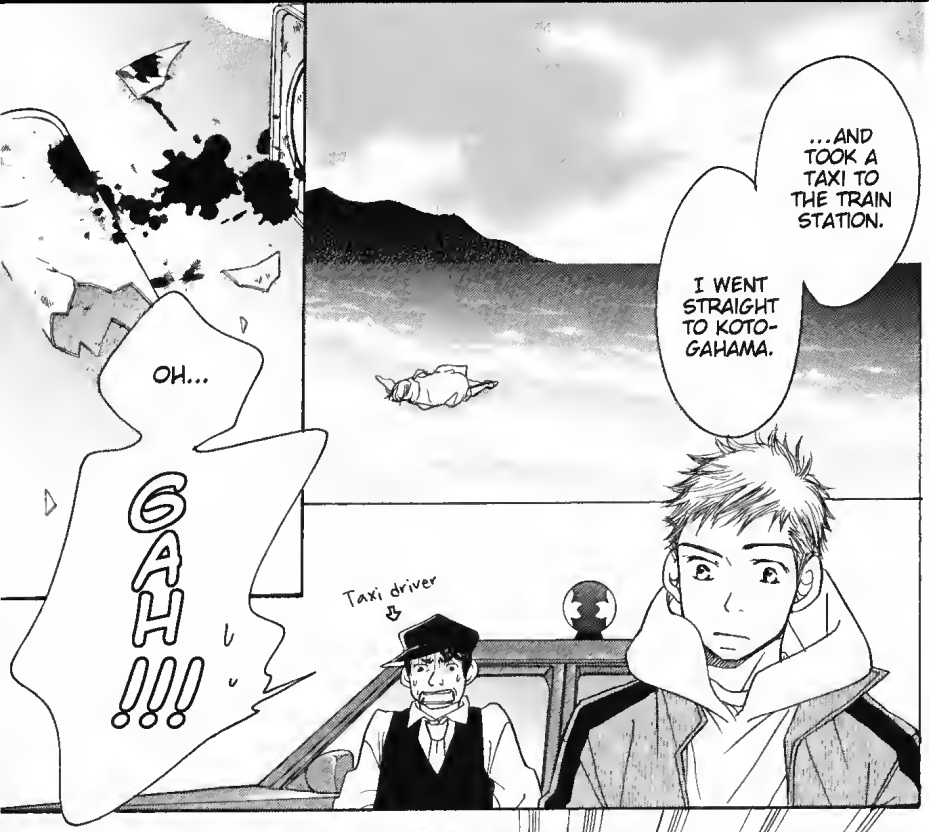

WE'RE GOING STAR-GAZING!
Wanna join us?

EVERYONE ELSE IS ALREADY THERE!!
WE'VE GOT THE PERFECT SPOT!
OH NO, I—
GET IN! GET IN!!

COOL...
WOW...

I DON'T WANT ANY MEMORIES ANYMORE.
NOT THE HAPPY ONES ...
...NOR THE UNHAPPY ONES.
IT SHOULD BRING BACK THOSE MEMORIES.
...I WAS SO HAPPY.
AT THE TIME THAT MY HUSBAND GAVE IT TO ME...
ME NEITHER.
...EVERY TIME I SEE HER SMILE...
...FOR A MOMENT...
...IT ALL COMES BACK TO ME...
It's hot!
One bowl per person!
FOR YEARS NOW...
BUT THE GOOD TIMES...
...COME WITH THE BAD.

PING
TOSS
OUCH!
THAT SMARTS!
OH... Sorry.
WHEN-EVER...
...I LOOK AT THIS RING, IT BRINGS BACK BAD MEMORIES.


...AND TOOK A TAXI TO THE TRAIN STATION.
I WENT STRAIGHT TO KOTO-GAHAMA.
OH...
GAH!!!
Taxi driver

RAISE HER WRIST!
TUNK
LIFT IT...
...ABOVE HER HEART!!
UH...
...RIGHT.
HEY, KID!!
DON'T JUST STAND THERE!! WE GOTTA HELP HER!!

THE WINTER WE FIRST MET...
HOW WE LAUGHED AND SMILED...
WE HAVE SO MANY NICE MEMORIES TOGETHER.
OUR FIRST KISS ON THE TRAIN...

THE WINTER SHE WAS TWENTY-SIX...
...I FOUND OUT ANN HAD DISAPPEARED.
MY MIND WENT BLANK.
I RAN OUT OF THE SCHOOL...
THE SCAR...
...ON HER WRIST WILL ALWAYS REMIND ME.
BUT THERE ARE...
...OTHER MEMORIES TOO.

SDSSSH
I WASHED MY HANDS OVER AND OVER...
...BUT IT SEEMED LIKE...
...THE BLOOD WOULD NEVER COME OFF.
I'LL NEVER FORGET.
IF SHE HAD DIED...
...I WOULD NEVER HAVE FORGIVEN HER.
I'D HAVE BLAMED HER MORE ...
...THAN SHE EVER BLAMED HER MOTHER.

SLUMP
I'm gonna floor it. Hold on!
VROOM
GOOD.
PATTER PATTER
PATTER PATTER PATTER
HOSPITAL
PATTER PATTER PATTER PATTER
GRAB
WHERE'S ANN?!!
HE FOUND HER IN TIME.
SHE'S ALL RIGHT.

BUT...
...I WOULD HAVE STAYED WEAK.
I WOULD HAVE HAD A HAPPY LIFE.
HAVING FUN WITH FRIENDS...
... FALLING IN LOVE ...
AND I...
...BECOME SOMEONE THAT WE LIKE.
I DON'T KNOW WHICH LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER...
...LIKE WHO I AM NOW.
...BUT... ...YOU TOLD US TO...

I'M NOT SURE.
MAYBE IT'S ALL OF THOSE THINGS.
IS THAT BECAUSE I LOVE HER?
BECAUSE SHE'S MY BEST FRIEND? BECAUSE SHE'S FAMILY?
I MIGHT NEVER HAVE LOVED ANYONE SO INTENSELY...
...BUT I WOULDN'T ... ...HAVE SUFFERED SO DEEPLY EITHER.
WHAT IF...
WHAT IF I HADN'T MET HER...?
...WE HADN'T SPENT THAT WINTER TOGETHER?
MY LIFE MIGHT HAVE BEEN EASIER.
SOME-TIMES ... ...I GET TO THINKING...

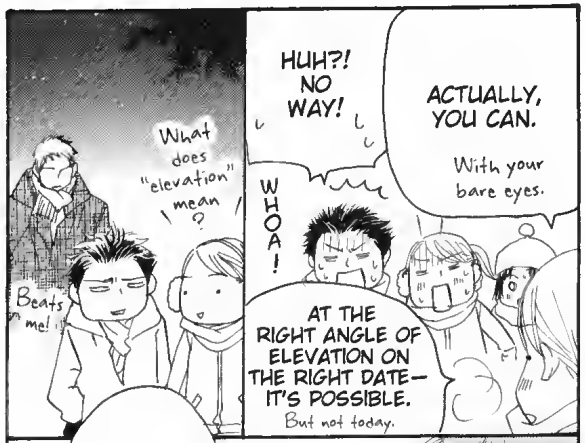
MRS. KODA...
I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE ...
...WHO YOU WANT TO BE IN TWENTY YEARS.
HERE'S TO A LONG LIFE!
TWENTY YEARS ...?!
I'LL BE CLOSE TO NINETY!
JUST IMAGINE ...
...YOUR FUTURE.
IMAGINE A HAPPY ONE.

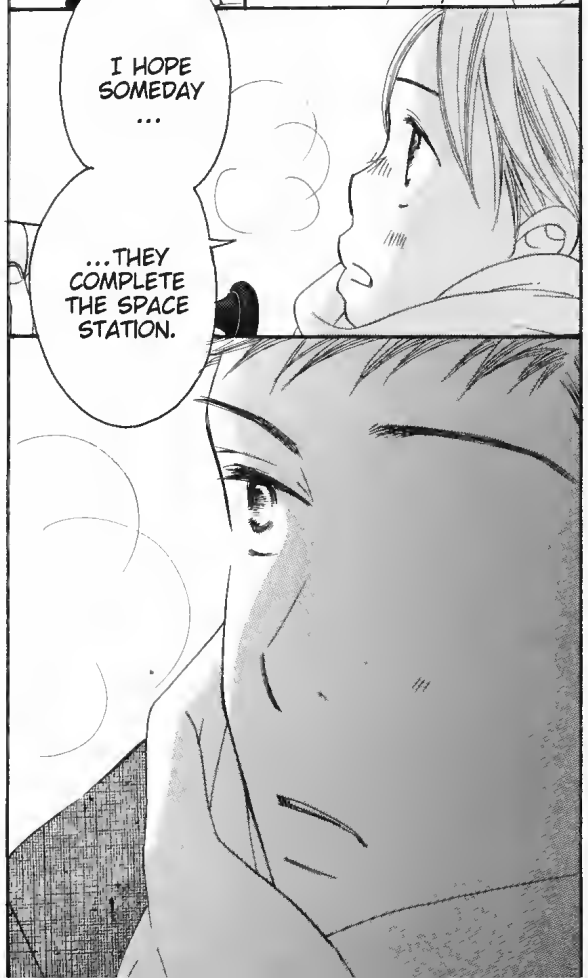
MRS. KODA...
I'M GLAD THE TEACHER WHO BRAINWASHED ME WAS YOU.
DAIGO-O-O!
We're running out of oshiruko!
Hurry
FOR...
...HOMEWORK, I ASSIGNED THEM...
...AN ESSAY...
...CALLED ...
..."MY FUTURE."
A CLASSIC THEME.
YEP.

In lieu of an afterword...

Thank you very much for reading!

07/04/06

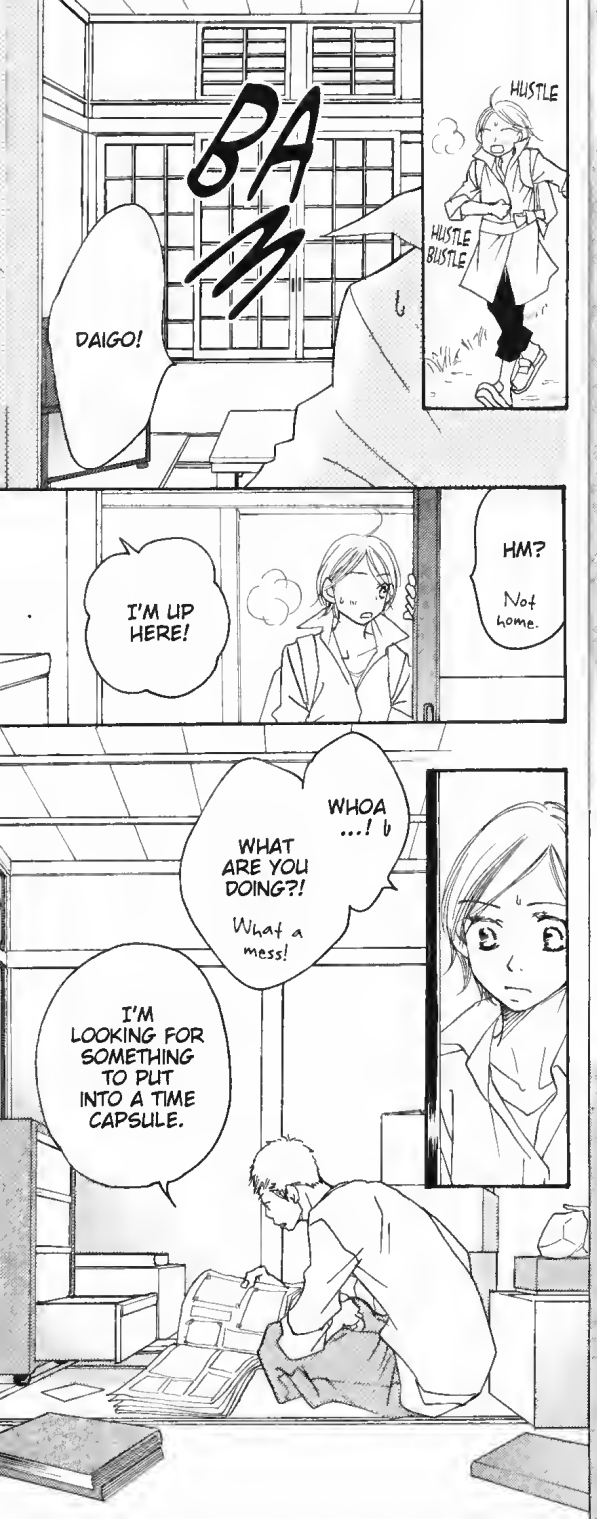

What does "elevation" mean?
Beats me!
HUH?! NO WAY!
WHOA!
ACTUALLY, YOU CAN.
With your bare eyes.
AT THE RIGHT ANGLE OF ELEVATION ON THE RIGHT DATE— IT'S POSSIBLE.
But not today.



...AND GET CONFUSED ...
...BY THIS CHAOTIC WORLD OF CONTRA-DICTIONS...
IF YOU LOSE HOPE...
...REMEMBER... THERE'S ALWAYS A RAY OF LIGHT...
...SHINING ON YOU.
WILL KIBOU...
...EVER MAKE IT INTO SPACE?

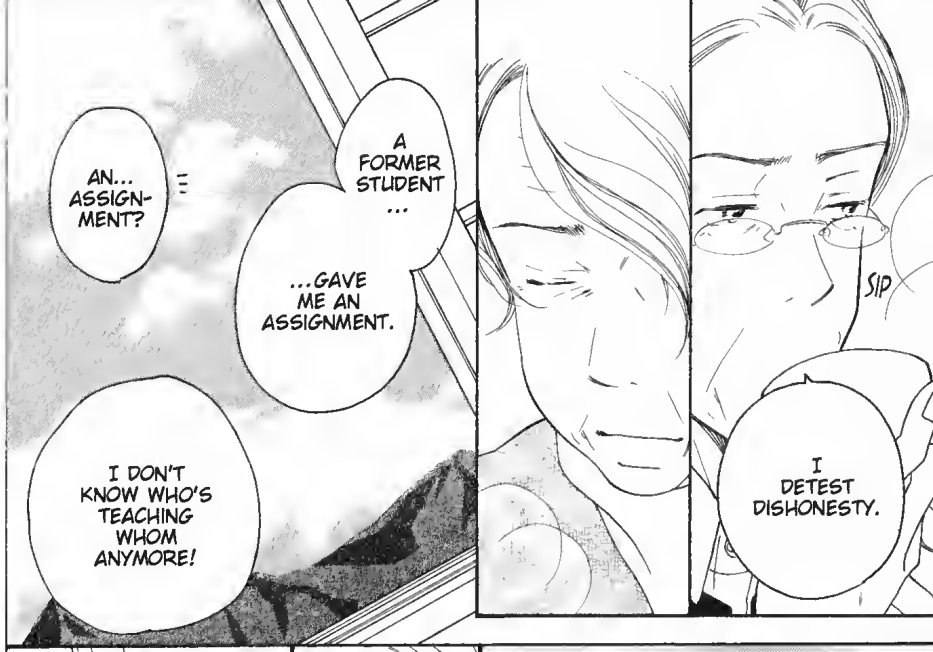
IS THERE MUCH TO DISCUSS?
THAT'S ALL RIGHT. MY LEG ISN'T BOTHERING ME TODAY.
IT'S ABOUT CLEANING THE NEIGHBORHOOD GUTTERS—
A COMMUNITY BULLETIN ...?
I COULD HAVE COME AND PICKED IT UP.
I COULD USE THE COMPANY.
IF SO, WHY DON'T YOU COME IN?
SO THERE WASN'T ANY POINT ANY-MORE.
THE SECRET GOT OUT TO A FORMER PUPIL OF MINE. THE ONE I MOST WANTED TO HIDE IT FROM...
YOU PUT AWAY YOUR HUSBAND'S PORTRAIT?
...
YES.
Here you go...
Hmph.
GLP GLP GLP

DING DONG
CHAK
MS. UENO...?



THE FIRST STEP...

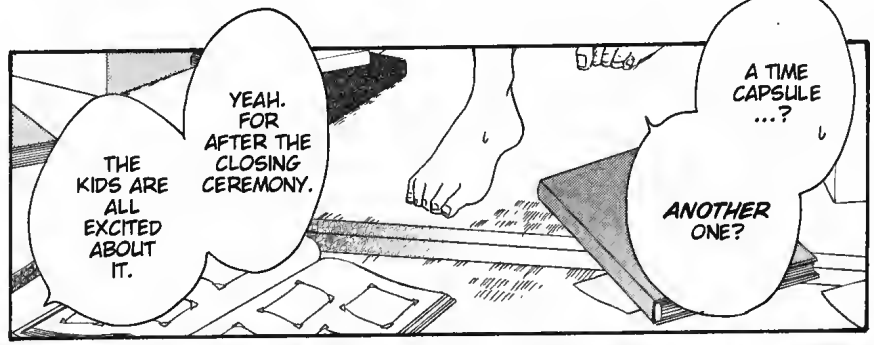
...IS TO WORK OUT WHO I AM RIGHT NOW.

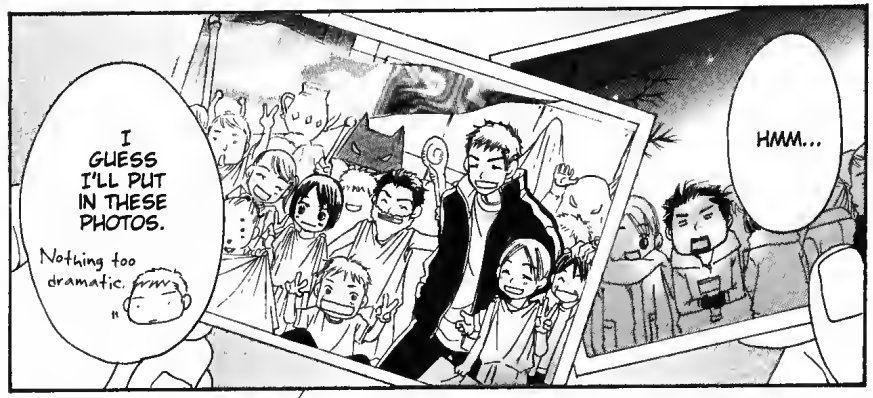


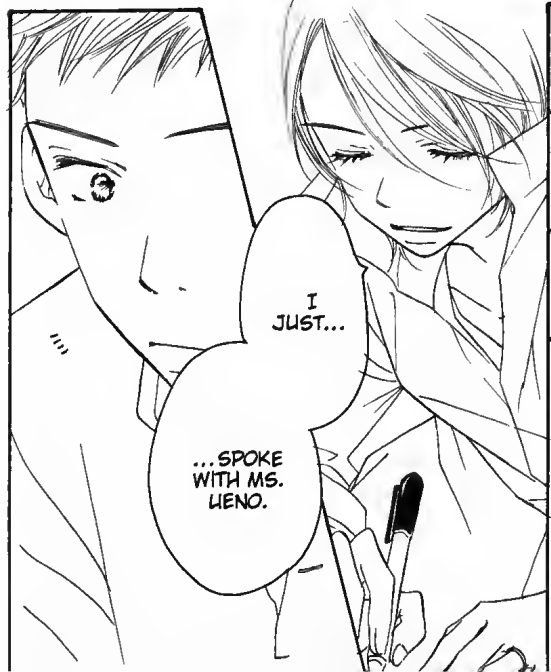
THAT'S ...
...A DIFFICULT ASSIGN-MENT.
TWEET
CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP
I THOUGHT SO MYSELF.
HE ASKED ME TO IMAGINE ...
...WHO I WANT TO BE TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW.
TO IMAGINE A HAPPY FUTURE.

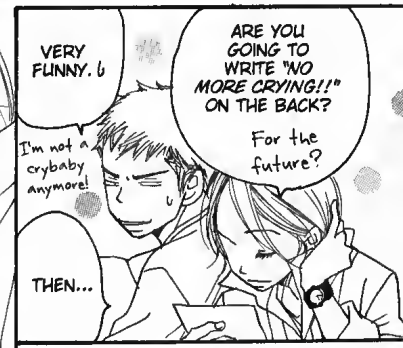
EITHER WAY, SHE WANTS TO TALK TO HIM.
WHETHER THEY START OVER OR GET DIVORCED...
SHE SAID ...
...MRS. KODA IS GOING TO TRY TO FIND HER HUSBAND.
HUH?
...AND SHE KNOWS THE AREA. SHE'LL FIND HIM.
I HEARD HE'S SEEING A DOCTOR FOR DIABETES...
I HOPE SHE FINDS HIM.

BRAVE
BE
YEAH.
"BE BRAVE"?

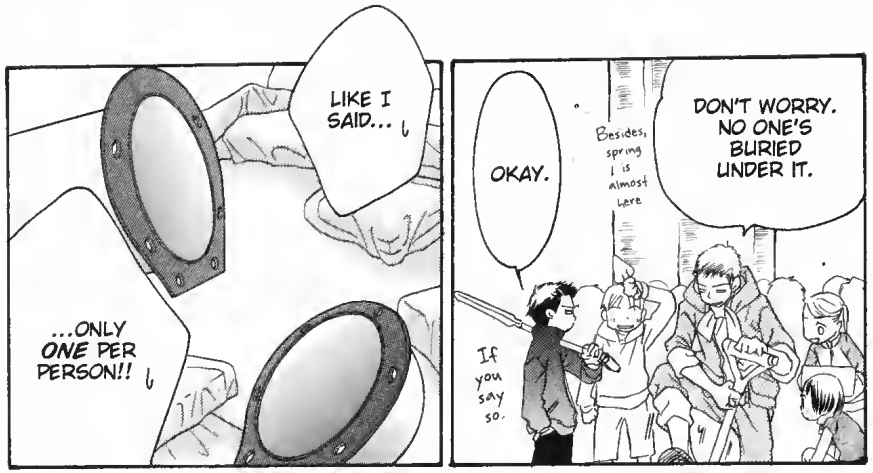

THE KIDS ARE ALL EXCITED ABOUT IT.
YEAH. FOR AFTER THE CLOSING CEREMONY.
A TIME CAPSULE ...?
ANOTHER ONE?


I GUESS I'LL PUT IN THESE PHOTOS.
Nothing too dramatic, from
HMM...

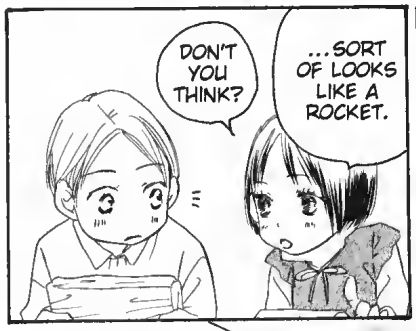

I JUST...
...SPOKE WITH MS. UENO.

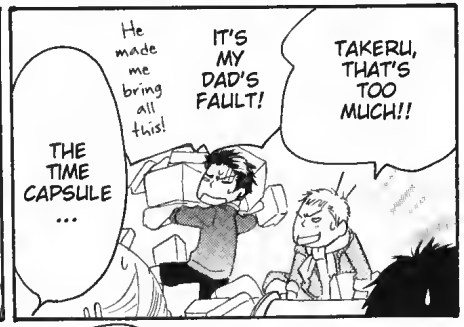

VERY FUNNY.
I'm not a crybaby anymore!
ARE YOU GOING TO WRITE "NO MORE CRYING!!" ON THE BACK?
For the future?
THEN...

...CAN I WRITE SOME-THING?
Gimme a pen.


LIKE I SAID...
...ONLY ONE PER PERSON!!

DON'T WORRY. NO ONE'S BURIED UNDER IT.
Besides, spring is almost here
OKAY.
If you say so.


DON'T YOU THINK?
...SORT OF LOOKS LIKE A ROCKET.


TAKERU, THAT'S TOO MUCH!!
IT'S MY DAD'S FAULT!
He made me bring all this!
THE TIME CAPSULE ...

RIKU... YOU'RE PUTTING THAT IN?
MY DREAM FOR MY FUTURE IS TO WORK AT
SPACE
YEP!
THE ESSAY I WROTE OVER WINTER BREAK.
BOOM

...WILL WE LOOK BACK AND REMINISCE ABOUT TODAY?
KYA HA HA!
WOO-HOO!

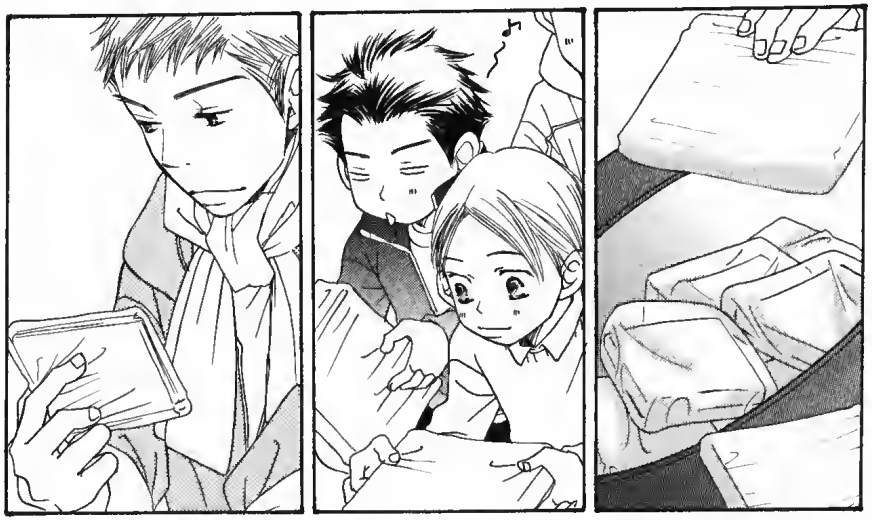
UNDER THE CHERRY TREE? HOW COME?
It isn't even blooming.

THAT'S WHAT...
...I COULDN'T BE... FOR SUCH A LONG TIME.

SOMEDAY...

TIME CAPSULE
ELEMENTARY SCHOO
WHATEVER YOU GROW UP TO BE IS OKAY BY ME.
WHETHER YOU'RE NICE OR SMART...
...OR STUPID OR LAZY— DOESN'T MATTER.
HMM...
IF YOU LAND YOUR DREAM JOB...
...OR FAIL AGAIN AND AGAIN— I WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED.
AHEM...
THESE AREN'T MY OWN WORDS, BUT...

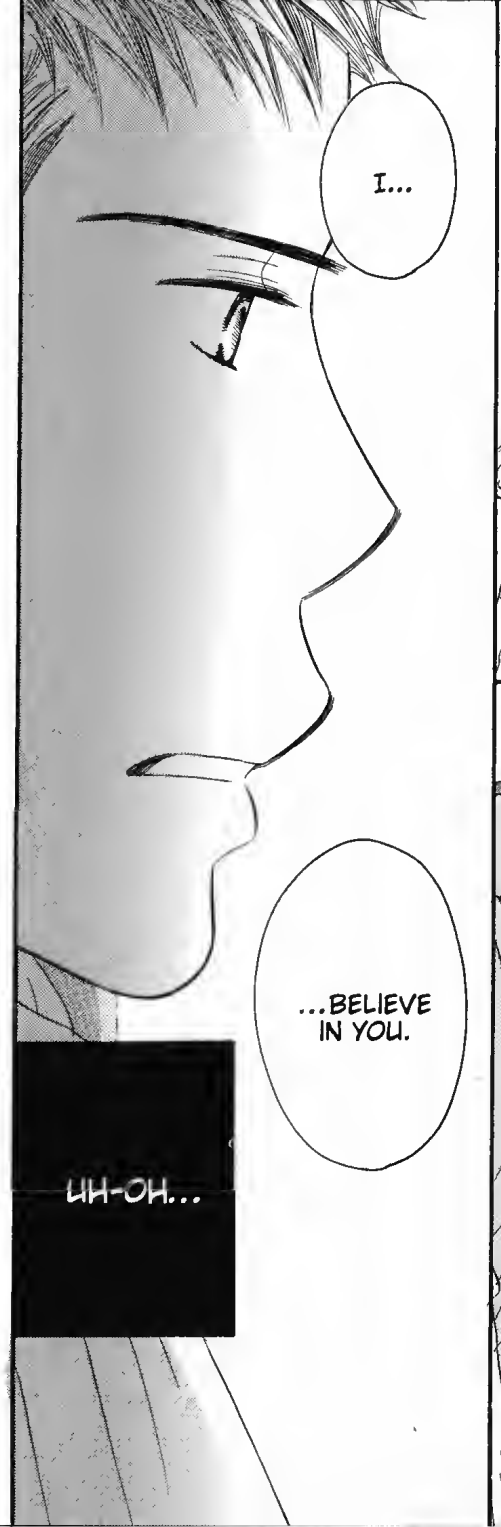
"MY DREAM FOR MY FUTURE...
...IS TO WORK AT THE SPACE STATION."
MY DREAM FOR MY FUTURE IS TO WORK AT THE SPACE STATION!
HMM...
GOOD LUCK.
...
Can't hurt to try, I guess.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, KARIN?
What are you putting in?
MY PANDORA COSTUME.
AND YOU, NAGI?
I'M PUTTING IN A PHOTO OF KEN!!
MATSU-DAIRA
Oh...



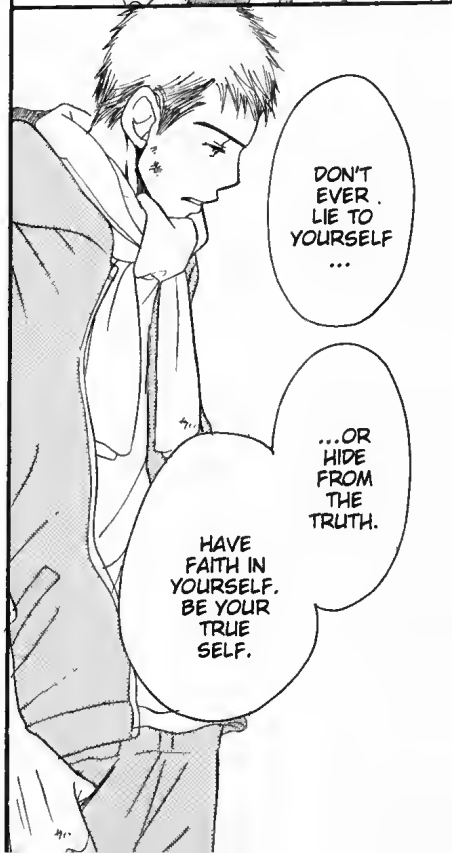
SEE YOU IN TWENTY YEARS!
Be careful walking home!
FEELS LIKE...
...I'M ABOUT TO CRY!

WAVE
WAVE
...
NO MORE CRYING !!
NO MORE CRYING !!

Later, Alligator!
Bye, Daigo.
See ya!


I...
...BELIEVE IN YOU.
UH-OH...

JUST MAKE SURE YOU GROW UP TO BE SOMEONE THAT YOU LIKE.

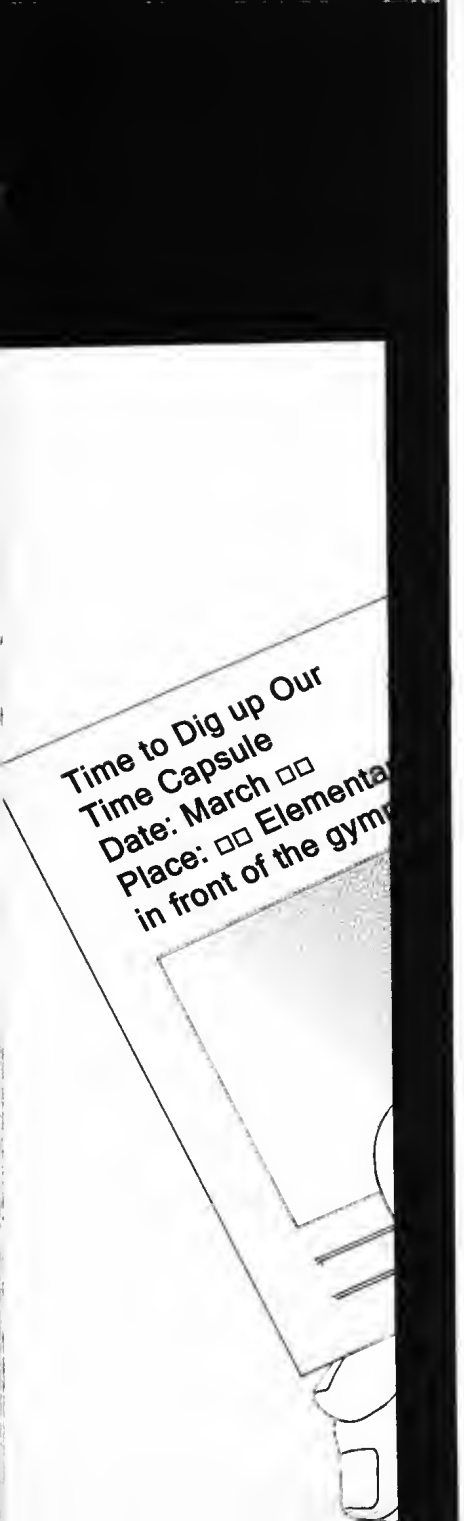

DON'T EVER LIE TO YOURSELF ...
...OR HIDE FROM THE TRUTH.
HAVE FAITH IN YOURSELF. BE YOUR TRUE SELF.

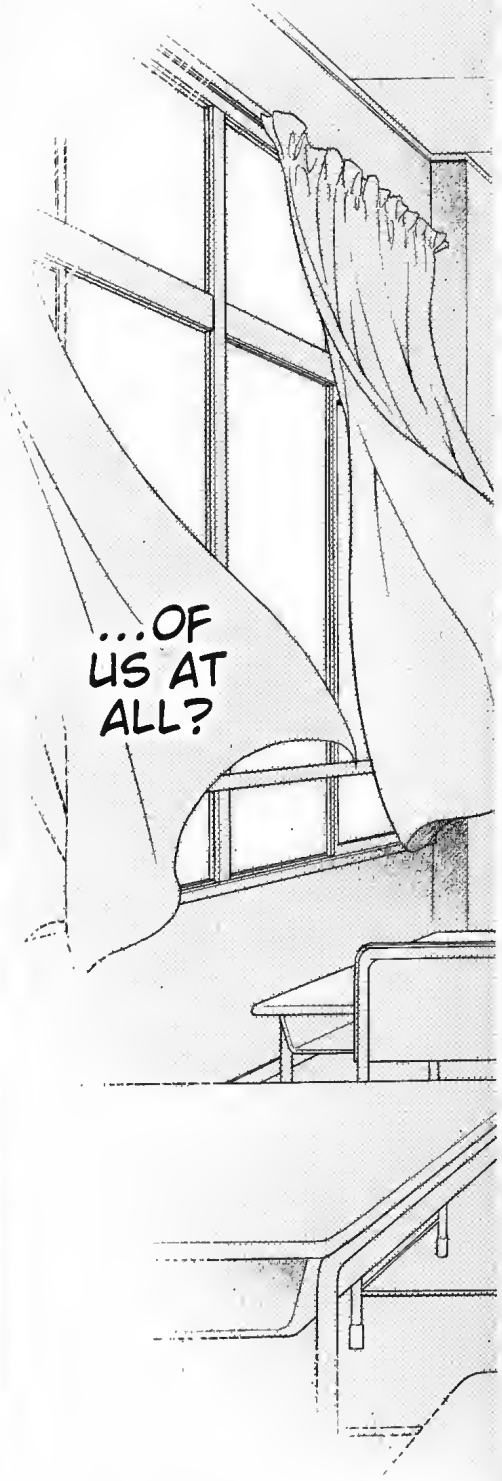
I THINK THAT'S WHY HE'S SO KIND...
...TO OTHERS.
HE NOTICES THINGS.
HE MIGHT NOT ADMIT IT TO HIMSELF, BUT...YEAH.
WHO...?! DAIGO?!
YOU'RE LIKE THAT TOO, FUJI.
Me too?
BA M
MAN- OH-MAN!! MARIKO LOOKS SUPER CUTE!!
Hurry up, Fuji-i-i!
HUBBUB
BUSTLE
CLATTER
ANYWAY ...
OH... THANKS.
...CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR MARRIAGE.

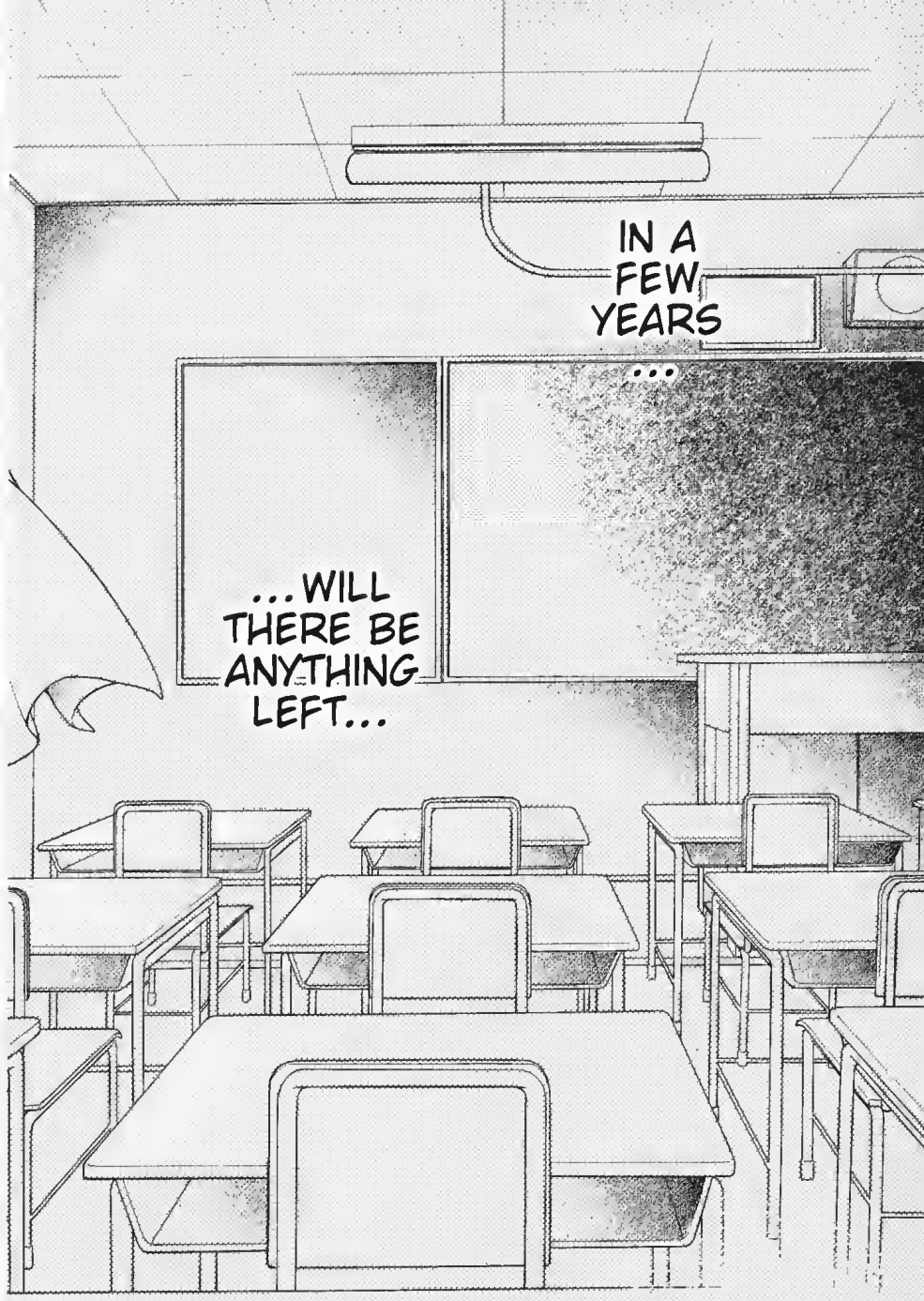
I THINK...
...HE'S ACTUALLY ...
...QUITE SENSITIVE.

IT'LL BE SPRING SOON.

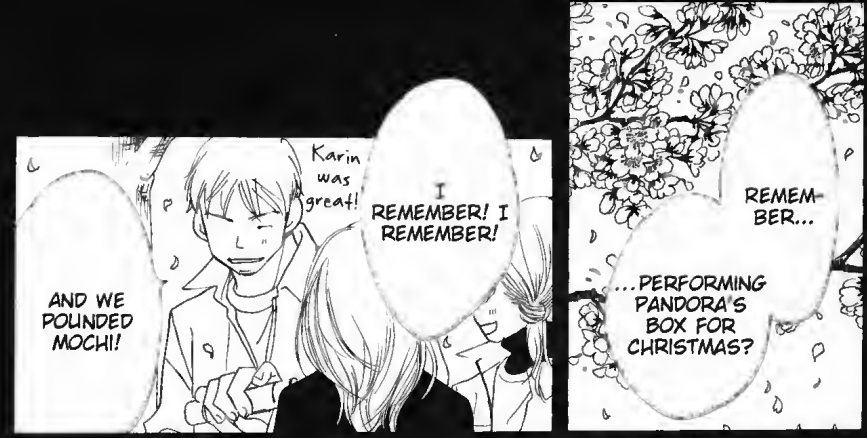
WHO WE ONCE WERE WILL SLIP AWAY.
DING DONG
ZH-ZHEEE
KLINK
THE PRESENT WILL FADE...
...NEW MEMORIES WILL REPLACE THE OLD...
...OUR CELLS WILL REPLACE THEM-SELVES...
...AND WE'LL KEEP BENDING FORWARD AND BACK AGAIN.
THEN SUMMER.
THE SEASONS ALWAYS RETURN.
CHIRR
CHIRR
CHIRR

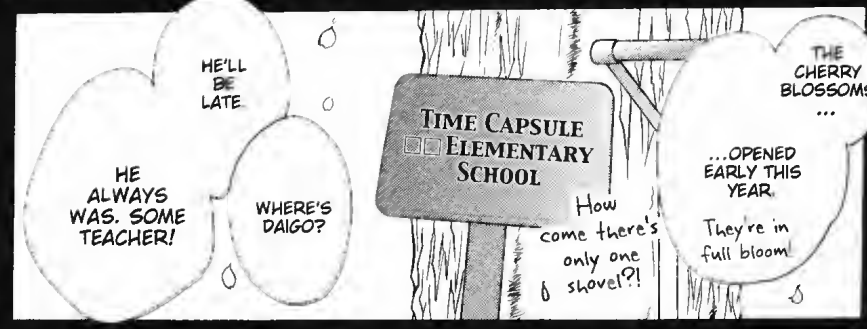

Time to Dig up Our
Time Capsule
Date: March □□
Place: □□ Elementa
in front of the gym


...OF
US AT
ALL?

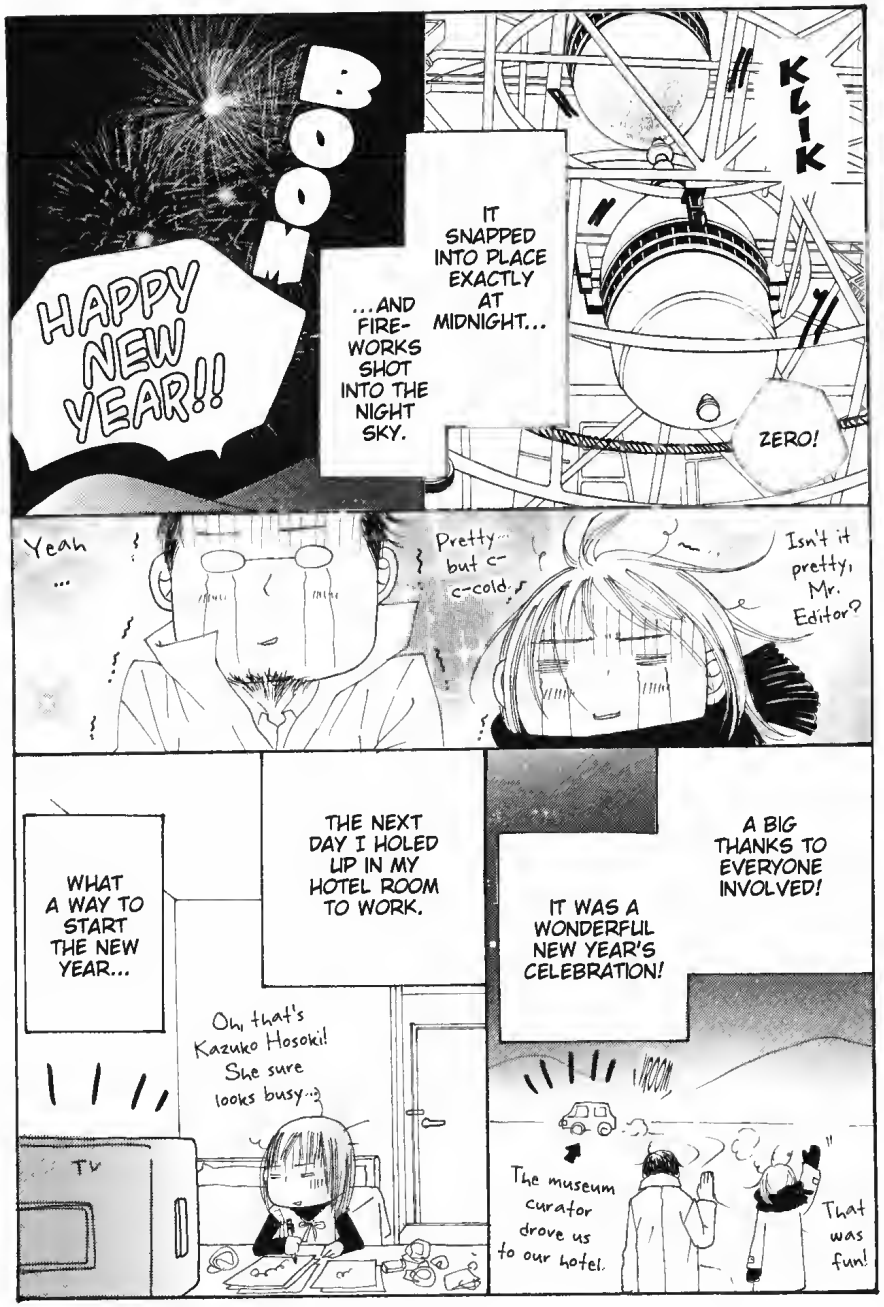

IN A
FEW
YEARS
...
...WILL
THERE BE
ANYTHING
LEFT...

Time Capsule, Part 2 * The End



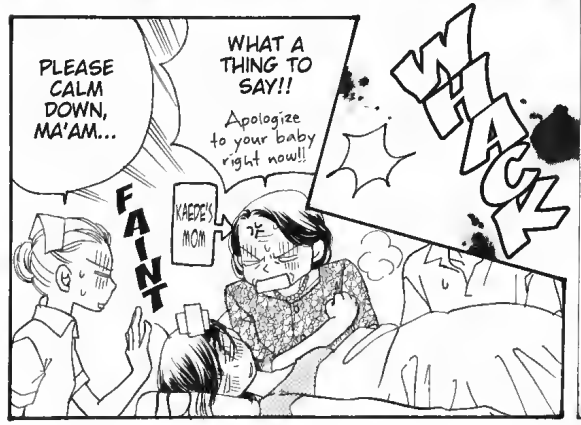


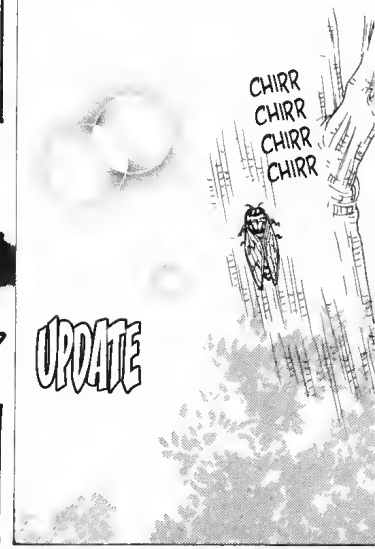
Sand Chronicles
BEHIND THE SCENES I
I WENT THERE FOR RESEARCH.
FREEZ-ING COLD!
IN SHIMANE...
Me, t-t-too...
Mr. Editor, I'm c-c-cold
EVERY NEW YEAR'S EVE...
...THE NIMA SAND MUSEUM FLIPS ITS ONE-YEAR SAND TIMER.
WOW!
TIME FESTIVAL
YAAY! YAAY!
THERE WERE GAMES AND PERFOR-MANCES ON AN OUTDOOR STAGE.
THEY HANDED OUT NEW YEAR'S SOBA.
SLOWLY, THE HOUR-GLASS STARTED TO TURN...
KREEAK
FIVE! FOUR!
THREE! TWO!
THIRTY SECONDS!
HEAVE HO!
HEAVE HO!
SOME PEOPLE PULLED ON A ROPE IN TIME TO A COUNTDOWN.


BOOM
HAPPY NEW YEAR!!
...AND FIRE-WORKS SHOT INTO THE NIGHT SKY.
IT SNAPPED INTO PLACE EXACTLY AT MIDNIGHT...
KLIK
ZERO!
Yeah...
Pretty... but c-c-cold.
Isn't it pretty, Mr. Editor?
WHAT A WAY TO START THE NEW YEAR...
THE NEXT DAY I HOLED UP IN MY HOTEL ROOM TO WORK.
Oh, that's Kazuko Hosoki! She sure looks busy...
TV
IT WAS A WONDERFUL NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION!
A BIG THANKS TO EVERYONE INVOLVED!
VROOM
The museum curator drove us to our hotel.
That was fun!

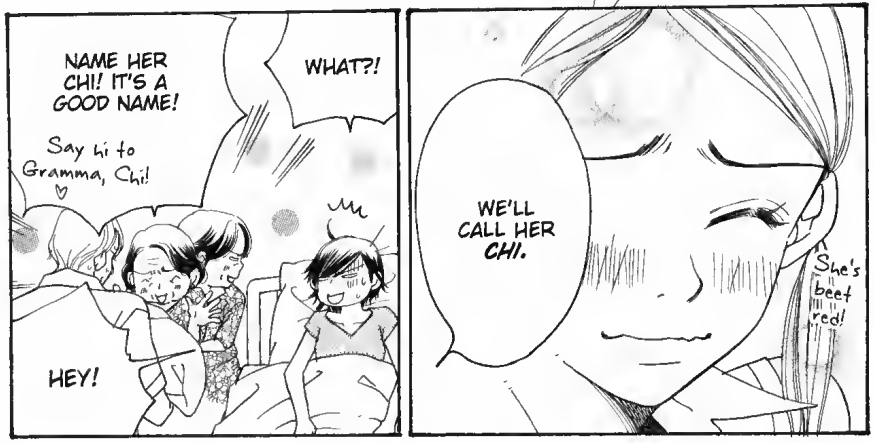
Sand Chronicles

Bonus Story:
Summer, Age 19

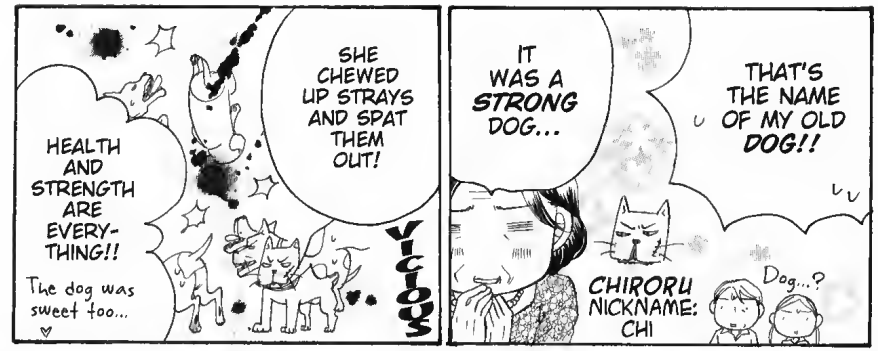


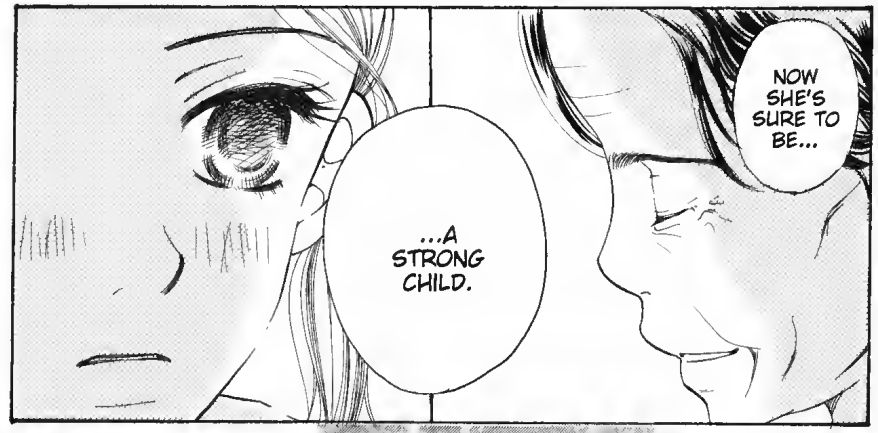


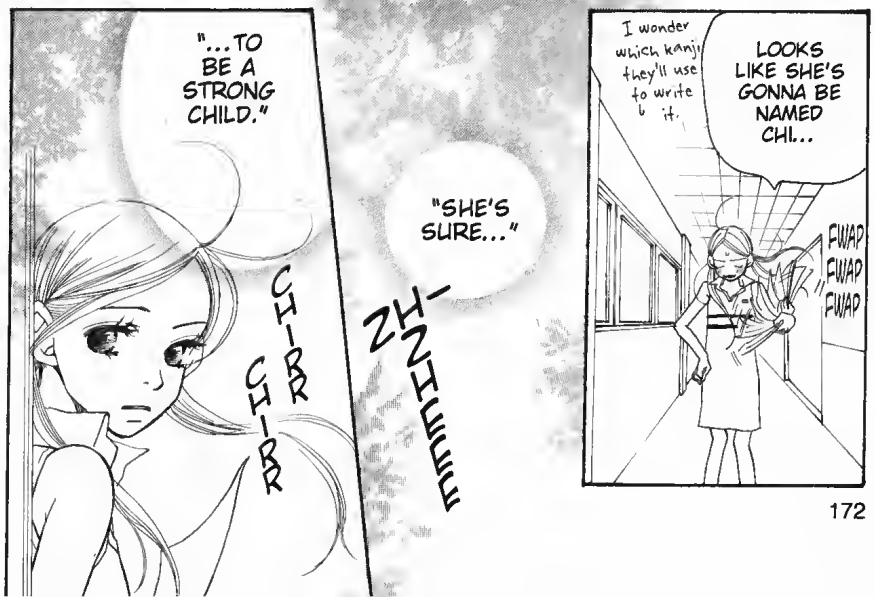
EXHAUSTED
KAEDE'S BABY WAS BORN ON JULY 8.
I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO DIE...
I SHOULD HAVE ASKED FOR PAIN MANAGEMENT ...
WHAT?! THE NATURAL WAY IS THE ONLY WAY!
OH, WOW
So tiny!
Eeee!

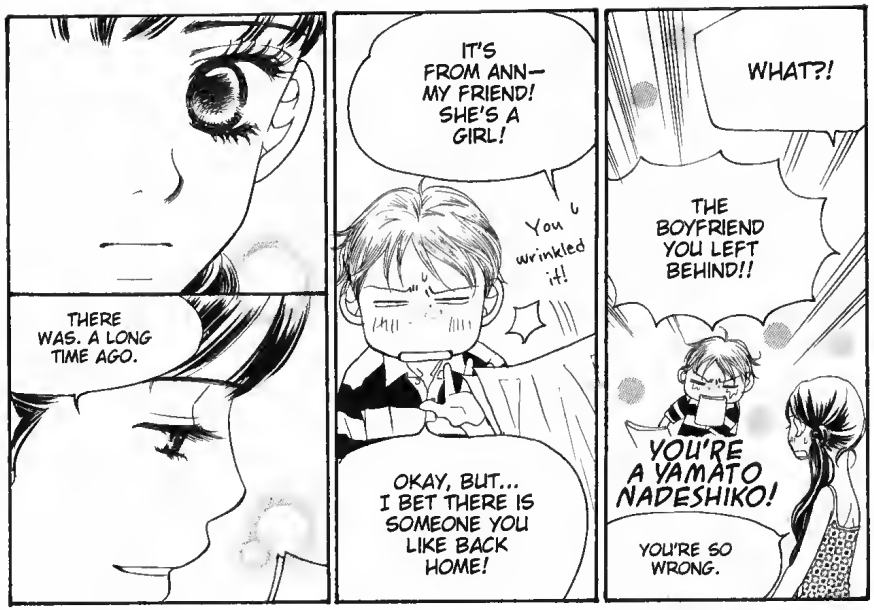


SUMMER CAMP
PARTICIPANTS WANTED
7/23 TO 7/
CHIK CHIK CHEW
ZH-ZH-ZHEEE
CHIRR CHIRR CHIRR CHIRR
"DEAR SHIKA..."
"HOW ARE YOU?"
ZH-ZH-ZHEEE
I PROMISED I'D NEVER LEAVE YOU, RIGHT?


HEALTH AND STRENGTH ARE EVERY-THING!!
The dog was sweet too...
SHE CHEWED UP STRAYS AND SPAT THEM OUT!
VICIOUS
IT WAS A STRONG DOG...
THAT'S THE NAME OF MY OLD DOG!!
CHIRORU NICKNAME: CHI
Dog...?


...A STRONG CHILD.
NOW SHE'S SURE TO BE...


"...TO BE A STRONG CHILD."
CHIRR CHIRR
"SHE'S SURE..."
ZH-ZHHHHH
I wonder which kanji they'll use to write it.
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S GONNA BE NAMED CHI...
FWAP FWAP FWAP


THERE WAS. A LONG TIME AGO.
IT'S FROM ANN— MY FRIEND! SHE'S A GIRL!
You wrinkled it!
OKAY, BUT... I BET THERE IS SOMEONE YOU LIKE BACK HOME!
WHAT?!
THE BOYFRIEND YOU LEFT BEHIND!!
YOU'RE A YAMATO NADESHIKO!
YOU'RE SO WRONG.

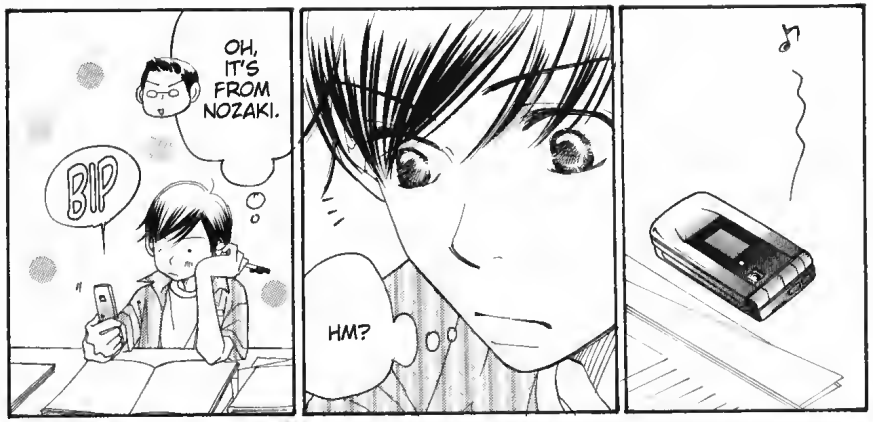
ZH-ZHEEE...
"I'LL NEVER FORGET HER."
"I'M SORRY."
BUT... HE LIKED SOMEONE ELSE.
HUH?!
ZH-ZHEEEEE
IN THE SUMMER, TWO YEARS AGO.
CHIRRRI
Really?
MMMMM
ZH-ZHEEEE

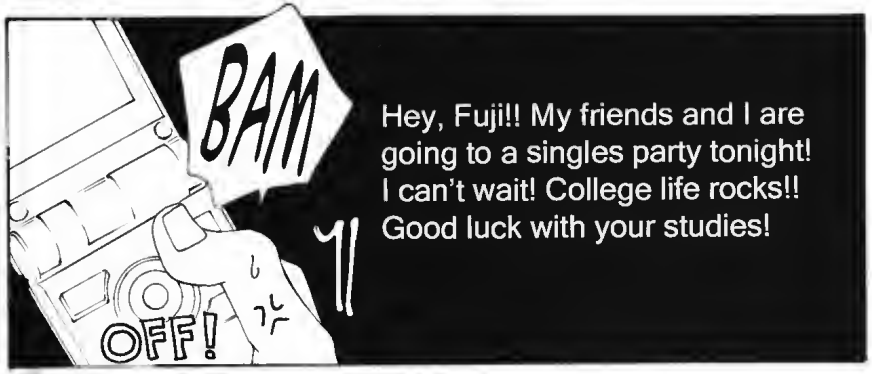
VANCOUVER, CANADA
CHIRR
"MY LITTLE SISTER WAS BORN TODAY.
"HER NAME IS CHI.
"SHE'S NAMED AFTER KAEDE'S CHILDHOOD DOG."
CHIRR
Eaton's

GRAB
HEY!
HOST FAMILY'S ELDEST SON (AGE 10)
HEY! GIVE THAT BACK!!
I BET IT'S FROM A GUY.
I can't read Japanese...
W ARE YOU? MY TTLE SISTER WAS BORN TODAY. HER NAME IS CHI. SHE'S NAMED AFTER KAEDE'S CHILDHOOD DOG.
KAEDE'S DOG?
...
"KAEDE'S MOM CHOSE THE NAME...
...SO THE BABY WILL GROW UP STRONG."

...WHEN WAS...
...YOUR FIRST TIME?
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
OW! THAT WAS A COMPLI-MENT!
SO, UH...
SO? WHEN WAS IT?
IS THAT WHAT HE MEANT?
I DON'T REMEM-BER.
RATTLE RATTLE
Come on! I wanna know!!
Taka-hashi, it's your turn.
WITH NARASAKI! YOU'VE DONE IT, RIGHT?
Details, details!
HUH?
OH...

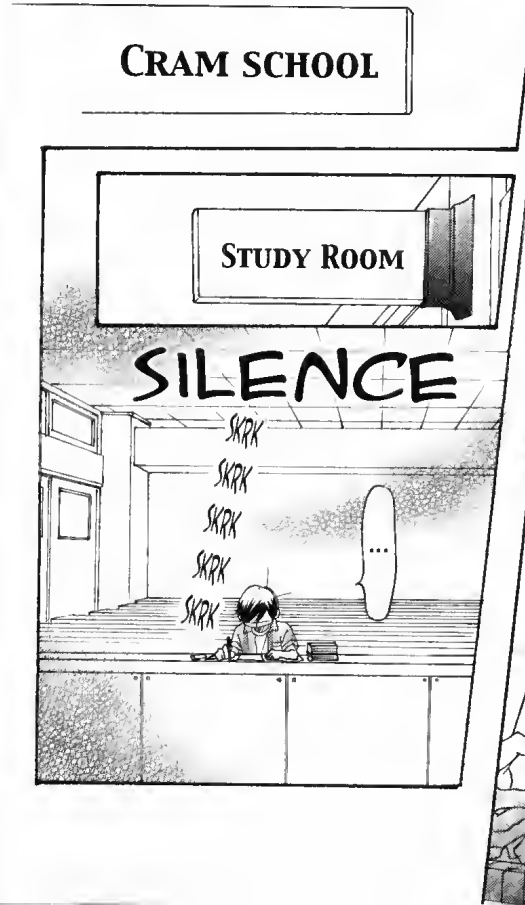
SHIMANE
CI-CI-CI-CI-CI-CI-CI-CI
ZHEEEEEEE
Argh! SO HOT...
APPGH
DADUM
He won!!!
DONE!
Read 'em and weep!
WHAM
THE AIR CONDITIONER BROKE AGAIN!!
PON!
NO WAY!
SHE'S HOT!
Really?!
TH WACK
Classes got canceled! Seriously!
HIS GIRL-FRIEND.
I SAW HER ONCE.
WHO'S HE TALKING TO?
Take 'em, you thief!
Thanks.
TING-A-LING
RATTLE RATTLE
NARASAKI...? I'M IN CLASS.
LIAR! I hear mahjong pieces!
CH-CHING CH-CHING
CLATTER CLATTER CLATTER CLATTER


OH, IT'S FROM NOZAKI.
BIP
HM?

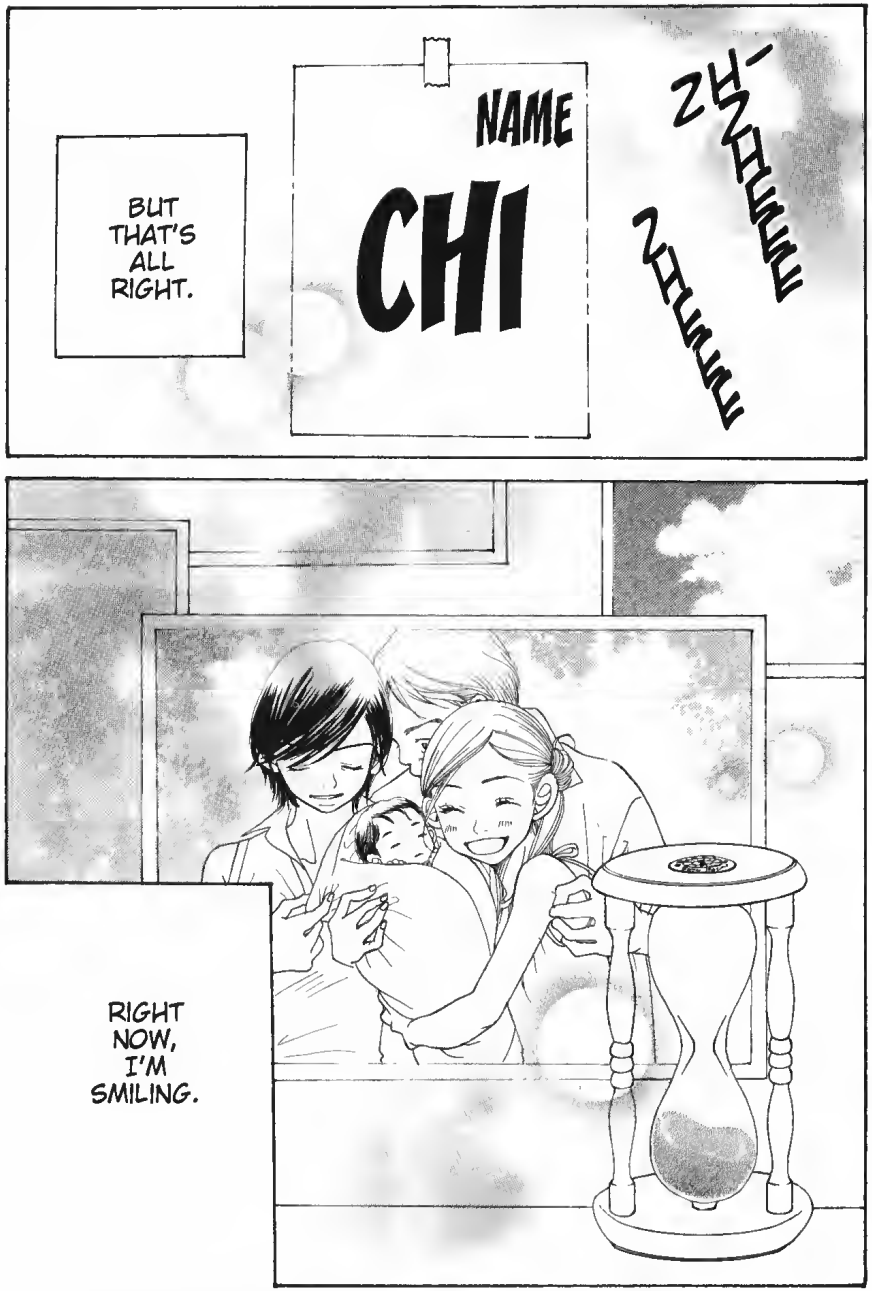

BAM
OFF!
Hey, Fuji!! My friends and I are going to a singles party tonight! I can't wait! College life rocks!! Good luck with your studies!

"AIIIEEEK! IT'S POURING."
COLD!
PLIP
I don't have an umbrella ...
IT'S RAINING.
TSSSHHH

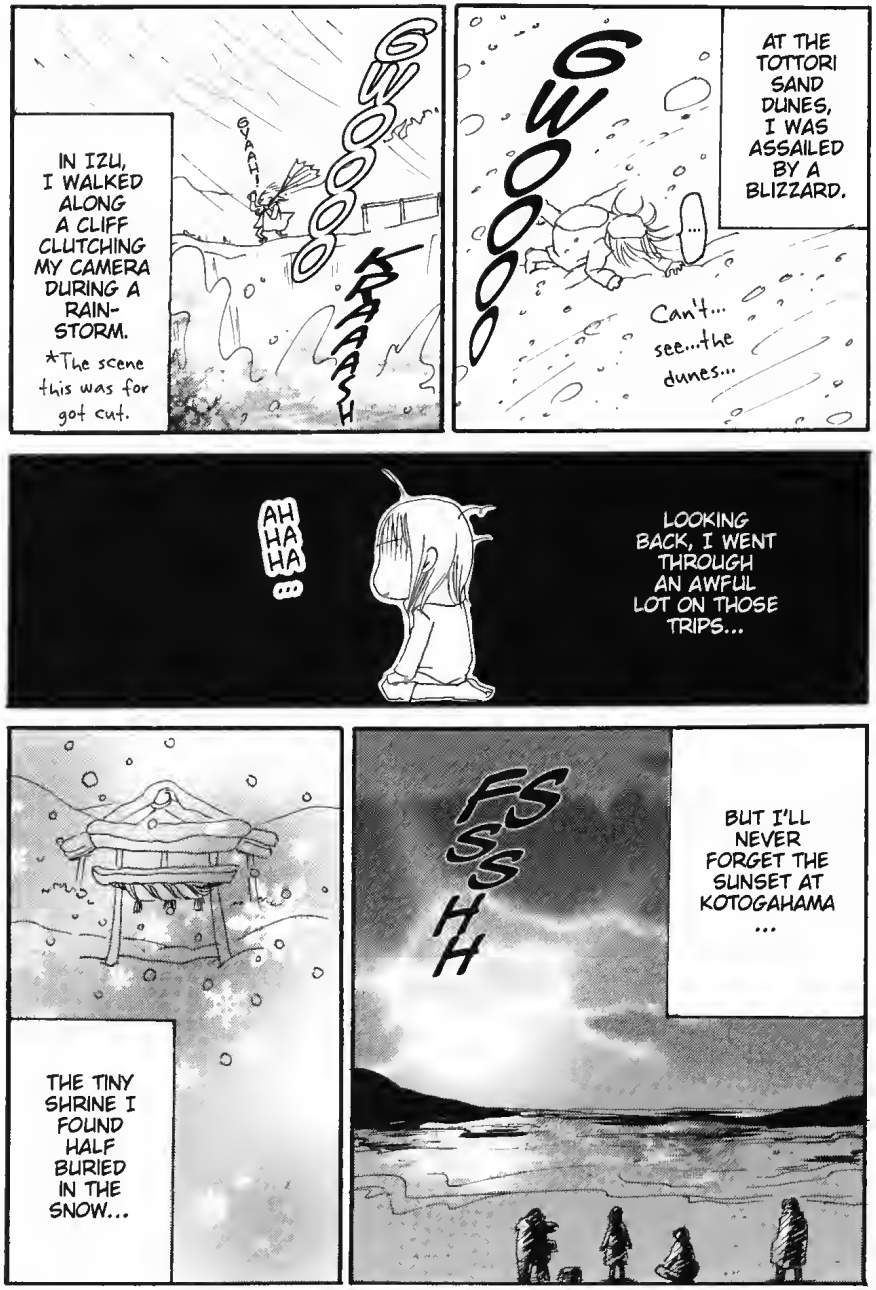
TOKYO
HONKONK


CRAM SCHOOL
STUDY ROOM
SILENCE
SKRK
SKRK
SKRK
SKRK
SKRK
...

WHY IS THE AIR CONDI-TIONER BROKEN?!!
2H-2HEEEE
GYA HA HA!
WHAM

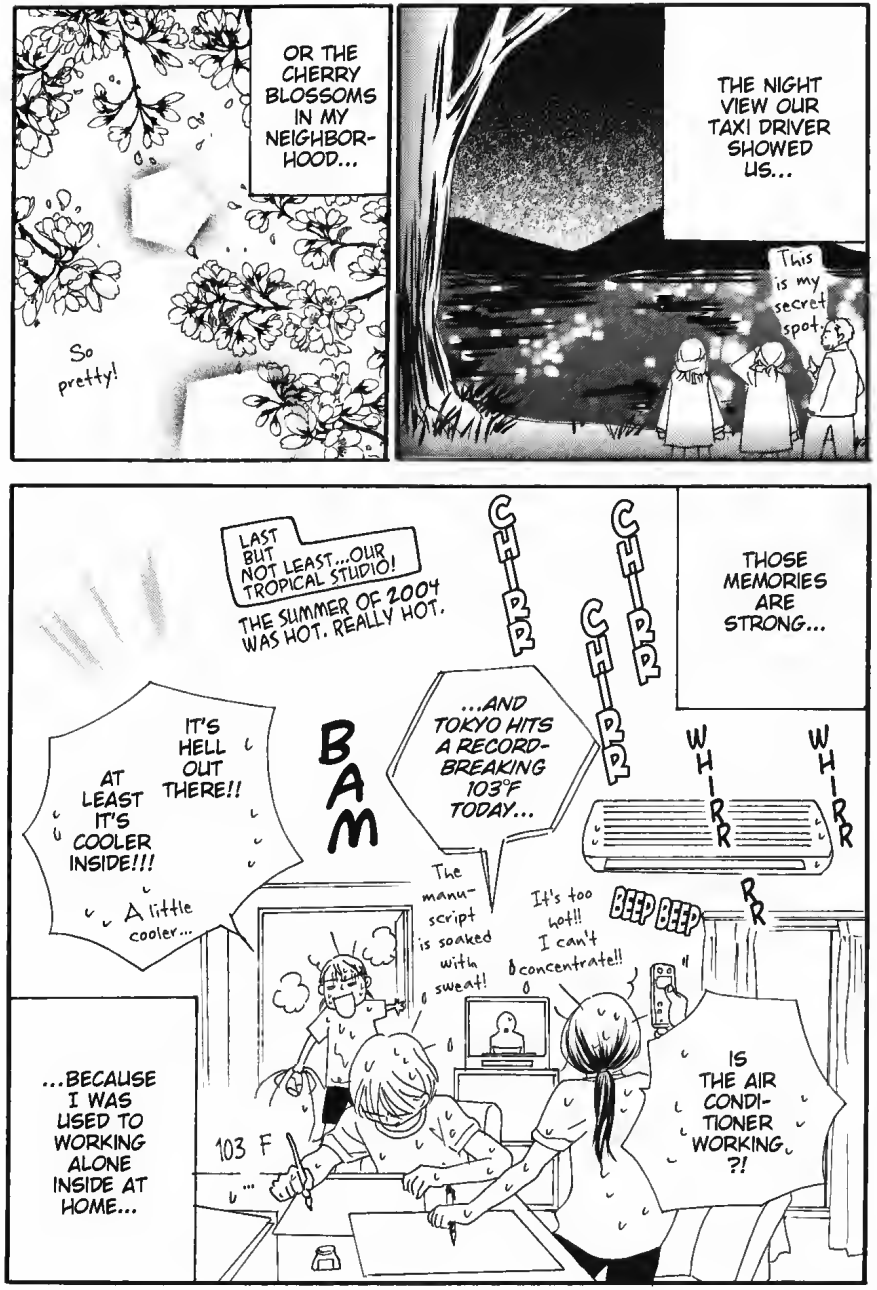


SAND CHRONICLES BONUS STORY: SUMMER, AGE19 * The End


IN IZU, I WALKED ALONG A CLIFF CLUTCHING MY CAMERA DURING A RAIN-STORM.
*The scene this was for got cut.
GYOGOG
KASSASH
GWOOOO
AT THE TOTTORI SAND DUNES, I WAS ASSAILED BY A BLIZZARD.
Can't... see...the dunes...
AH HA HA...
LOOKING BACK, I WENT THROUGH AN AWFUL LOT ON THOSE TRIPS...
THE TINY SHRINE I FOUND HALF BURIED IN THE SNOW...
FS SS HH
BUT I'LL NEVER FORGET THE SUNSET AT KOTOGAHAMA ...

Sand Chronicles
BEHIND THE SCENES II
THE AUTHOR IN COLLEGE- TRAGIC BUDGET TRAVEL
TWO NIGHTS ON A ROCKING BOAT...
KA-SPLASH
TILT
Bleagh!
EVEN
FWOO
I can't stand it! I'm gonna die!
I'm gonna barf!
WHEN I WENT TO OKINAWA, THE BIGGEST TYPHOON IN FIFTY YEARS STRUCK.
WHEN I WENT TO HOKKAIDO, ANOTHER TYPHOON HIT.
You bring bad weather with you wherever you go!
SISTER
I wanted to ride a horse, go up in a hot-air balloon...
KA-SPLOOSH
FWOOO
I didn't know Hokkaido even had typhoons!
CANADA WASN'T MUCH BETTER.
No way!
SORRY, NO DOG-SLEDDING. IT'S UNUSUALLY WARM. ALL THE SNOW MELTED.
*THE NEXT DAY IT WAS -22°F...
NO LONGER HOPES FOR GOOD WEATHER.
JUST RAIN? NO TYPHOONS OR BLIZZARDS? YAY!
Great!!!
...AND EXPECT RAIN ALL DAY TOMORROW.
TV
FOR ME, RESEARCH TRIPS ARE A CONSTANT BATTLE WITH THE ELEMENTS.

A LOT HAPPENED OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS, BUT IT WAS FUN.
A FRIEND SENDS ME SEASONAL PHOTOS VIA E-MAIL.
FIREFLIES
LIME APRICOT
MT. FUJI IN THE SPRING
CRABS
THEY'RE VERY REFRESHING.
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR READING TO THE VERY END!
I HOPE WE MEET AGAIN SOMEDAY!


OR THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS IN MY NEIGHBOR-HOOD...
So pretty!
THE NIGHT VIEW OUR TAXI DRIVER SHOWED US...
This is my secret spot.
LAST BUT NOT LEAST...OUR TROPICAL STUDIO!
THE SUMMER OF 2004 WAS HOT. REALLY HOT.
CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP
THOSE MEMORIES ARE STRONG...
IT'S HELL OUT THERE!!
AT LEAST IT'S COOLER INSIDE!!!
A little cooler...
BAM
...AND TOKYO HITS A RECORD-BREAKING 103°F TODAY...
WHIRR WHIRR
The manu-script is soaked with sweat!
It's too hot!! I can't concentrate!!
BEEP BEEP
...BECAUSE I WAS USED TO WORKING ALONE INSIDE AT HOME...
103 F
IS THE AIR CONDI-TIONER WORKING, ?!

Page 157, panel 2: "Later, Alligator!"
In the original, he says *onarapu*, which means "fart." Children sometimes say this instead of *sayonara* (goodbye) because the onara portion of the word is common to both *sayonara* and *onara*.

Page 168, panel 3: *toshi-koshi soba*
Literally "crossing-the-year" buckwheat noodles. Japanese eat soba at the new year, usually late on New Year's Eve, to carry them over into the new year. The long length of the noodle symbolizes a long life.

Page 168, panel 5: "One hundred and eight men and women whose ages matched that year's zodiac animal pulled a rope in time to a countdown."
In Buddhism, the number 108 represents the number of earthly desires. Many shrines ring a large bell 108 times on New Year's Eve.

Page 169, panel 5: Kazuko Hosoki
A famous fortune-teller who makes frequent television appearances.

Page 175, panel 1: Yamato Nadeshiko
A personification of the ideal Japanese woman who possesses all the traditional virtues.

Page 176, panel 2: "Pon!"
A mahjong phrase signifying that the player has three of a kind.

Glossary

If only adolescence came with an instruction manual.
We can't give you that, but this glossary of terms
might prove useful for this volume.

Page 8, panel 1: "Pee-yew!"
The seeds of female ginkgo trees have a very strong smell.

Page 8, panel 2: *chawanmushi*
A savory steamed egg dish.

Page 24, panel 6: kanji on paper
The students are learning brush calligraphy by writing the kanji for *aozora* (blue sky).

Page 28, panel 4: Egawa
A well-known former Japanese baseball pitcher and sports analyst.

Page 28, panel 5: coin bank
The traditional Japanese piggy bank looks like a Japanese post box.

Page 52, panel 3: Doraemon
A popular children's manga character, a robot cat from the future who pals around with a schoolboy named Nobita. Doraemon has a magical *yojigen*, or "fourth-dimensional pocket," full of mysterious objects.

Page 70, panel 1: "Run, Melos!"
A short story by Osamu Dazai. In the story, a character named Melos is forced to run in order to save the life of a friend.

Page 81, panel 6: flowers
A memorial corner for those who have passed away.

Page 100, panel 4: *daikon, kinako, anko*
Daikon: Japanese radish; *kinako*: soybean flour; *anko*: red bean paste.

Page 103, panel 3: *Kibou*
Kibou (Hope), known as the Japanese Experiment Module (JEM) in English. Not to be confused with the canceled Japanese space project called HOPE, short for H-2 Orbital Plane, Experimental.

Page 108, panel 4: cleaning the gutters
Some neighborhoods perform group cleaning activities before the New Year.

Page 122, panel 5: *Crust*
A movie about a seven-foot-tall mutant boxing prawn.

Page 131, panel 1: *oshiruko*
A hot red-bean soup that sometimes has mochi in it.

Page 147, panel 1: community bulletin
Some neighborhoods in Japan pass around bulletins with a variety of notices. After viewing, neighbors stamp the bulletin with their name and deliver it to the next person.

Page 154, panel, 4: Ken Matsudaira
A popular Japanese actor and singer born in 1953.

Profile of Hinako Ashihara

This is the final volume...and I mean it this time! Thank you so much for reading all the way to the end!
—Hinako Ashihara

Hinako Ashihara won the 50th Shogakukan Manga Award for *Sunadokei*. She debuted with *Sono Hanashi Okotowari Shimasu* in *Bessatsu Shojo Comics* in 1994. Her other works include *SOS*, *Forbidden Dance*, and *Tennen Bitter Chocolate*.